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THE HISTORY

OF

BETHLEHEM UNITED

METHODIST CHURCH

1835 - 1988

By Michael E. Perdue



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PREFACE

Any history of a rural Methodist Church is only a partial one at best. The written history is only a mere scattering of some of the important events in the life of the church. The following is the story of Bethlehem United Methodist Church and while the following account is far from complete every effort has been made to uncover and document the events that have helped shape this growing and dedicated congregation. In a day when the rural Methodist church is being pushed into oblivion, it is comforting to know that Bethlehem is one of the few churches in which growth is positive and encouraging.

Why is the written history of a church so important? The history of a church gives the congregation a true and irreplaceable sense of identity and a sense of belonging! The church, as it is today, is the result of long and arduous labors of dedicated Christians, many of

whom entered the Church Trium phant.

The fact that the Methodist Church has yet to become a denomination that preserves and respects its scared past is a great obstacle to overcome when one researches and writes a local church history. The loss of records and the inaccuracy of others only makes a hard job that much more difficult. Errors of course are unavoidable and impossible to prevent inspite of all the endless hours spent proofreading and researching.

In writing the history of Bethlehem Methodist Church the author has had fine cooperation and encouragement from the congregation and friends of the church. Deep and sincere appreciation is

extended to:

Mrs. Mary Jarrell Meador Mrs. Olivia Moore Rich Mr. Francis Irving Anderson Rev. Parker H. Hager Dr. J. Elwood Carroll Mrs. Margaret Kerley Miss Ruth Walker Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Williams Mr. Ronald Hundley Mr. Frederick Gammon Mr. & Mrs. Thomas A. Moore, Jr. Mrs. Nell Moore Gammon Rev. and Mrs. J. Curtis Swaim Mrs. Mammie Crouse Mitchell Mrs. Nancy Spaine Mrs. Ruth Ellington Siler Mr. & Mrs. C. F. Burton, Jr. Mr. Robert W. Carter, Jr. Mrs. Leola Meador Dr. Larry Tise

Rev. Joseph W. Lasley Miss Oliva Raper Rev. Bruce Pate Miss E. Doree Goode Miss Nancy Withers Mrs. Nightingale M. Smith Rev. Larry Jent

Rev. Silas G. Strader Mrs. Lucy M. Rankin Mrs. Ellis W. Pugh Rev. Paul Townsend
Mr. Jesse Meador Burton
Mrs. Olivia Goode Heafner
Dr. J. Braxton Harris
Mrs. Mary Darlington
Miss Frances R. Brown
Mrs. Ellen P. Tilley
Mrs. Nancy Somers Walton
Mr. Don Hoover

A deep and very special note of thanks is extended to Kenneth Blankenship in typesetting this manuscript in a most thorough and efficient manner. Both Mr. Blankenship and Mr. Frank Meador, publisher, have given much of their abundant talents in seeing this history through to publication. To them the Bethlehem Church and this author express their sincere appreciation.

These and many others have made this history possible and in many ways this has been a group project.

In closing, may the following pages encourage future church members and historians to preserve their heritage so "that the future might learn from the past." May God bless our scared past!

> Michael Predue Wentworth, North Carolina October 1, 1988

Bethlehem Church History Committee 1988

Mary Meador, Chairman Thomas A. Moore, Jr. Mary Williams Ronald Hundely, Sr. Helen Moore

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It is startling to think that Anglican Minister John Wesley's conversion on Alderagate Street in London in May 1738 would result in the rise of one of the greatest Protestant denominations in the World. Usually when we think of one's conversion we think of how such an occurrence affects the converted individual. In the case of Wesley we are far more concerned with the effects his conversion had upon others. Many Methodist historians have traced the Weslevan movement into the far reaches of the world in some detail and the United States is no exception to that practice. However, as one narrows his study of Methodism down to the state and local level, he finds that very little, if anything, has been preserved in the way of records. "Methodists as a general rule are extremely unconscious of their heritage. Unlike Moravians and Quakers, Methodists have not shown any interest in the laborious task of keeping detailed records." No truer words regarding North Carolina Methodist have ever been written, and that statement is quite applicable to Methodism in Rockingham County in which is located Bethlehem United Methodist Church, the subject of this cursory sketch.

In order to survey the history of any local church it is always important to dig down to the very roots of the tree. Such is seldom an easy task to do, whether the researcher is a professional or not. Also the scope of a local church history is often one of debate-how detailed and how far back in time one must go. In the case of Bethlehem and other early churches in Rockingham County of the Methodist faith, it seems logical to begin the account with the arrival of Methodism in North Carolina in the 1760's and 1770's.

The first official Methodist minister to preach in North Carolina was Joseph Pilmoor at Currituck Courthouse on September 28, 1772. Pilmoor was one of the first two missionaries sent to America by John Wesley. Pilmoor was followed by Robert Williams, who at the first American "conference" of Methodists at Philadelphia in 1773, was assigned to the Petersburg Circuit which by 1774 was extended into northeastern North Carolina. Williams is credited with organizing North Carolina's first Methodist society. In the years before the Revolution numerous Methodist societies or classes appeared in the extreme section of eastern North Carolina. While it was Wesley's

intention that the Methodist societies should be under the auspices of the Church of England, it soon became apparent that another religious denomination was developing in America.²

The fourth Conference of American Methodist's was held in Baltimore in May 1776 and it was at this meeting that the first preaching circuit to lie entirely in North Carolina was established. The boundaries of the Carolina Circuit were obscure other than that Virginia and the Atlantic Ocean served as such. Consequently the circuit riders within traveled as much and as far as possible otherwise.³

Out of the unwieldy (North) Carolina Circuit arose initially three smaller ones in 1779, the Roanoke, Tar River and New Hope circuits. The Roanoke encompassed extreme northeastern North Carolina and southeastern Virginia. The Tar River extended to just west of Raleigh. The New Hope Circuit extended as far as the western boundary of present day Guilford County. Finally in 1780 the Yadkin Circuit was created to extend Methodism on into the western portion of the state.⁴

In the years following the cessation of hostilities between America and Britain it became obvious to John Wesley that the sentiment of American Methodists favored the formation of a separate religious body from the now unpopular Church of England. Thus, on September 1, 1784 Wesley ordained Thomas Coke "Superintendent" of the American Methodist societies. Coke arrived in America and called for a conference of Methodist Ministers to convene in the City of Baltimore in December 1784. At the famed "Christmas Conference" the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America was created with Thomas Coke and fellow Wesley associate Francis Asbury named "Bishop" of the new denomination. (Due to Coke's missionary travels to other lands Asbury would eventually become the driving force in American Methodism.) This national association of ministers developed into the General Conference.⁵

After 1784, conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church were held in regions wherever a group of pastors could easily reach by

traveling. The first of these regional meetings held after the Christmas Conference was held at the home of Green Hill near Louisburg, North Carolina on April 19, 1785. Such regional conferences were held on a yearly basis, more or less, in a number of places along the eastern seaboard. Still no official association held these circuits together other than the General Conference.

It is believed that as early as 1776 some circuit riders were preaching in private homes in what is now, Surry, Stokes, and Rockingham counties. In 1783 the Guilford Circuit was created out of the Yadkin and probably part of the New Hope Circuit. The Guilford Circuit was composed of at least Guilford and Rockingham (formed out of Guilford in 1785) counties. The first ministers appointed to this new circuit were Samuel Dudley and James Gibbons.⁷

Prior to 1801 the many circuits throughout the United States made up the General Conference and that was the extent of the church administrative system. In 1801 the district concept was adopted in which several adjoining circuits were grouped into districts, presided over by elders (these presiding elders are now known as district superintendents). These districts were directly under the General Conference. The Guilford, Yadkin, and Salisbury Circuits were thus placed in the Salisbury District. In 1802 the term "Annual Conference" was introduced in which several adjoining districts were grouped together into other administrative level interposed between the district and the General Conference. A large portion of North Carolina was placed in the Virginia Annual Conference in 1802, including Rockingham County which was then a part of the Guilford Circuit. From 1808 to 1834 the Guilford Circuit was in the Yadkin District and afterward back in the Salisbury District.8

METHODISM COMES TO ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

The first indication of Methodist activity in Rockingham County dates to the early visits to the county by Bishop Francis Asbury in 1786 and 1787, at which times he preached (according to his diary) at Newnam's Church, located in present-day Reidsville. After 1788 this church was known as Smith's Chapel which Asbury visited in 1788 and 1799. Smith's Chapel existed until the 1830's. In 1790 Issac Lowe was ordained a minister in the church by Asbury and by 1795 had built a meeting house on his land located some three miles east of what is now Reidsville. This was the beginning of Lowes Church, the property for which Issac Lowe deeded to a set of trustees in March 1796. Lowe's is recognized by most historians as being the "Mother church of Methodism in Rockingham County".

In January of 1799 on Wolf Island Creek, two miles northwest of Reidsville, Salem Church was organized. These first three churches were largely composed of former Maryland residents who brought their faith with them into North Carolina. In 1805 Hayse Meetinghouse was organized in the Lawsonville area of eastern Rockingham County and was probably the forerunner of Penile (variant spellings exist) Church, organized in the same area in 1838 and disbanded in the early 1900's. Methodism in the Wentworth area existed as early as 1804 when "crazy" Lorenzo Dow, the famed evangelist, preached there to a crowd of 1500 people "in the freezing air and falling snow" for over two hours. By the 1820's a Methodist society was holding services in the Wentworth Meetinghouse located just east of town. In October 1836 the Wentworth Church was formally organized and the first of two sanctuaries was built.9

MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH THE MOTHER OF BETHLEHEM METHODIST CHURCH

In the early 1800's a considerable number of settlers from Virginia, namely from the Prince Edward County area, arrived in Rockingham County. They settled in large part along Town Creek in the present day Mount Carmel and Bethlehem communities. Among these first families were the Ellingtons, Moores, Tuckers, and Guerrants. While the Methodists in the Reidsville area (Lowe's, Salem and Smith's) were in a large sense settlers from Maryland and Delaware, the Methodists in the Town Creek area were largely from Virginia. An inclusive study of these basically unrelated Methodist influxes into Rockingham County is badly needed and steps toward that end may be taken in the not too distant future.

By 1808 a Methodist society had been established in the present Oregon Hill community. Among the first nineteen members of this "class" included members of the Black, Cole, Ellington, Ellis, Jones, McKinzie, Mize, Robinson, Ruffin, Thomas, Tucker, and Whalebone families. That this was the first class of what became Mount Carmel Church seems certain according to the recently discovered Carmel Class Papers which begin in 1808. Unfortunately, there has arisen a "tradition" in the present Mount Carmel Church that dates the congregation as early as 1775! While Mount Carmel was definitely an early preaching point in the county, no documentary evidence has been found to date the congregation earlier than 1808. Such has been the conclusion of county historians for decades. "Tradition" of recent vintage in the Carmel congregation also suggests that it was once known as the Smith's Meetinghouse which Bishop Asbury visited frequently during his travels in the area. Rockingham County historian Robert W. Carter, who has done considerable research on this matter concluded in 1983 that:

I know of no professional or amateur historian who has dated Mount Carmel earlier than 1805 - 1808..... Prior to 1975 (when the church published a brief historical sketch) Mount Carmel had no tradition that Asbury preached there or that the church was once known as Smith's Meetinghouse. The reason is simple....the Smith's Meetinghouse where Asbury preached was in present day Reidsville...seven miles south of Mount Carmel. In 1800 William Martin deeded one acre of land on Little Troublesome Creek to the trustees of Smith's Meetinghouse....all these men (trustees) lived in or south of present day Reidsville, and none of them are listed as members of Mount Carmel Church in 1808-...Smith's Meetinghouse was first known as Newnam's Church (where Asbury records as having preached in March 1786 and April 1787)...On May 23, 1788 Asbury preached at Newnam's Church but this time he refers to the church as Smith's Chapel... Rev. James Meacham's diary in 1795 proves beyond any doubt that Newnam's Church and Smith's Meetinghouse are the same church. (The diary relates that Rev. Meacham preached at Smith's Chapel and that he rode home with Mr. Newnam the class leader.) As none of the Newnam's...ever lived in the Mount Carmel area, it seems certain that Asbury is referring to the Newnam-Smith Church (which the deeds clearly position in what is now Reidsville)...after a vast amount of research I fail to find any evidence that dates Mount Carmel prior to 1808......¹⁰

The earliest deed for the Mount Carmel Church is dated September 1, 1813 when John Morehead, the father of future Governor John Motley Morehead, deeded to the Carmel trustees a parcel of land in the vicinity of the present church plant. The argument that the Carmel congregation was formally organized in 1813 can quite plausibly be made as it was custom in those days for the church to purchase its site as soon as possible.¹¹

Nevertheless, Carmel Church continued to thrive through the early 1800's with the aid of dedicated members from the Smith, Edwards, and Guerrant families to name a few. The first brush arbor used by Methodists in Rockingham County was probably at Carmel and

Bethlehem Church is Organized

with great and successful revivals the congregation flourished. Little else is known of Methodist activities in the Town Creek area until the 1830's.

BETHLEHEM CHURCH IS ORGANIZED

At the second quarterly conference of Guilford Circuit in 1835 held at Center Church in northern Guilford County on August 12, a resolution was passed calling for the building of a church near the plantation of Dr. Edward T. Broadnax in Rockingham County. Lloyd Waters, Rev. Benton Field, and Peter D. Guerrant were appointed as a committee to oversee the construction. Lloyd Waters (1797 -1846) was a class leader of the Guilford Circuit and the husband of Ann Edwards, the daughter of Methodist minister George Edwards who resided in the Mount Carmel community. Benton Field (1797 - 1871) was a former pastor of the Virginia Conference who retired from the active ministry and settled in Rockingham County in the 1830's. His second wife was Martha Guerrant of the Mount Carmel area. In 1840 the Field family moved to Leaksville and was responsible for the development of the Leaksville Church. Rev. Field was an enterprising person who was engaged in a number of businesses in Leaksville and he is credited with constructing a number of local churches - including Bethlehem. Peter Dutois Guerrant (1806 - 1869) was the son of Thomas Porter Guerrant and his wife Elizabeth Spain Ellington who lived in the Mount Carmel Church area. Peter D. Guerrant was a local Methodist preacher for a number of years as was his brother Daniel Ellington Guerrant (1804 - 1895).12

In September 1835 (the exact date was not recorded) Lloyd Waters, a leader in the Mount Carmel Church, sold to the trustees of the yet-to-be-named congregation a parcel of land for one dollar. This tract was located southwest of the Waters home (now the site of the residence of Mrs. Nell Moore Gammon) near the waters of Town Creek and was described as follows:

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Beginning at a Spanish Oak in said Waters' and Wesson's line. Thence north 12 poles (198 feet) to a stake, thence east 13 poles (214.5 feet) to a stake. Thence south 12 poles to a stake Thence west to the place of the beginning, containing ------ 156 poles of land (42,471 sq. feet).¹³

The trustees of the church were prominent members of the community:

Thomas Porter Guerrant Daniel E. Guerrant John Moore Trainum Tyler Benton Field Peter D. Guerrant Thomas G. Wisdom

John Fleming Moore (died 1852) was the son of Barnett Moore (died about 1822) who according to tradition came to Rockingham County from Prince Edward County, Virginia probably before 1800. Thomas G. Wisdom was an official of the Guilford Circuit who lived on Wolf Island Creek near the Salem Church. Trainum Tyler (1804-1863) apparently came from Pittsylvania County, Virginia and owned property on Wolf Island Creek. In 1832 Tyler married Martha Anderson of Pittsylvania County. Their descendants continue to be active in numerous Methodist congregations in the area. Martha Anderson Tyler was the sister of Rev. John H. Anderson who in later years would render much aid and guidance to the Bethlehem congregation.¹⁴

It was on this tract purchased from Lloyd Waters that the first sanctuary of the congregation was built. The church was named Bethlehem from the Hebrew which means "HOUSE OF BREAD" (the persons responsible for selection of this name are unknown). The first sanctuary was located some 100 feet east of the present sanctuary (1988) and was a plain frame structure, nearly square in shape. A gallery for the use of local slaves was located inside the building. There was quite likely two separate entrances to the sanctuary - one for the men and one for the women as many early

Bethlehem Church is Organized

congregations were segregated according to sex. Men and women often sat in their own separate sections in the sanctuary. Other than this little is known about the appearance of the first sanctuary which stood until about 1906.¹⁵

The purchase of the original church lot from Lloyd Waters in 1835 was followed by another acquisition of land adjoining the church property in 1838. Issac Wesson, a resident of the area, gave to the trustees of Bethlehem Church:

Thomas P. Guerrant Daniel E. Guerrant Willian, Hudson Benton Field John Moore Thomas G. Wisdom

a tract on November 27, 1838 described as follows:

... on the waters of Town Creek. Beginning at a stake on the side of the Leaksville road in an old field near the Bethlehem Meetinghouse to the east. Thence with the road south 36 (degrees) west 16 poles to a stake. Thence with the road south 75 (degrees) west 24 poles to a persimon. Thence north 18 poles to a stake. Thence east with the meetinghouse land, before deeded, thirty three poles to the first station containing two acres & eighty eight poles more or less. 16

In spite of the changes in the position of the road cited in this deed, it would appear that the present sanctuary for Bethlehem would be located on the Wesson tract deeded to the church in 1838. While the 1835 and 1838 deeds are the only recorded land transactions dealing with the church prior to 1892, evidence seems to indicate that the church acquired additional adjoining property by 1892 as will be seen later.

A considerable portion of Bethlehem's charter membership is said to have come from the Mount Carmel Church. Consequently, Mount Carmel is frequently referred to as the "Mother of Bethlehem Church".

When Bethlehem was organized in 1835 it was placed on the

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Guilford Circuit which in the 1830's contained the following churches:

GUILFORD CIRCUIT CENTER

GUILFORD COUNTY

ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

Greensborough
Pleasant Garden
Rehobeth
Muir's Chapel
Jamestown
Sandy Ridge
Bethlehem
Bethel
Goshen
Center
Gethsamane
Fairfield
Lee's Chapel
Mount Pleasant

Lowe's
Mount Carmel
Salem
Smith's Chapel (formerly
Newnam's)
Rockingham Courthouse
(Wentworth)
Clarksberry¹⁷

The first ministers who served the Bethlehem Church were Revs. J. Leigh and T. M. Sharp who served the Guilford Circuit until 1836 when the Rev. David B. Nicholson was appointed.¹⁸

By the mid 1830's it was decided that the Virginia Conference had become too unwieldy and that a North Carolina Conference should be created. The Virginia Conference made its final pastoral appointment for most of its North Carolina charges in 1837. The Rockingham County churches were taken out of the Guilford Circuit and the Salisbury District and were placed in the newly created Rockingham Circuit and the Danville District. This new arrangement was further implemented when the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed at Greensborough in January 1838. The North Carolina Conference took in churches in the heart of the state, mostly in the Piedmont and eastern sections. No further administrative adjustments or realignments were made concerning the Rocking-

ham County churches until 1850.19

Very little is known about the first fifty years of the Bethlehem Church. This in itself is not at all unusual that early local church records have been lost or destroyed. Not only can the absence of records explain Bethlehem's anonymity, it can also be assumed that the young congregation was somewhat overshadowed by her larger mother congregation to the east - Mount Carmel.

In December 1840 Rev. William Warren Albea (1810 - 1896) was appointed to the Rockingham Circuit for the year 1841 and was ioined by Rev. John Rich (1815 - 1851) to pastor the charge during 1842. Albea's notebook which survives today records that he preached at Bethlehem nineteen times in 1841. Through the devoted efforts of Albea and Rich the declining circuit membership trend was reversed. In 1843 Rich conducted a great revival at Mount Carmel in which more than 150 people were converted. Among those converted at Carmel was Numa Fletcher Reid (1825 - 1873) a schoolteacher from the Thompsonville community east of Reidsville. Numa Reid's father Rev. James Reid pastored the old Guilford Circuit in the 1820's and was a respected member of the North Carolina Conference for many years. James Reid had married a daughter of Rev. George Edwards, a local minister and a leading force in the Mount Carmel Church, Numa Reid answered the call to the ministry in 1847 and was granted his license to preach from the Rockingham Circuit Quarterly Conference. In 1849 Reid received his first appointment which was to pastor the Rockingham Circuit, and that he did for two years. Thus, began the pastoral career of one of the truly great leaders in North Carolina Methodism.²⁰

The Rev. Robah Bumpas, who would serve the Bethlehem Church in 1876, knew Rev. Reid well and in an address a century after Reid's birth remarked that:

Another leader of the Conference...was Numa F. Reid, slender, frail, never of vigorous health, lacked the graces of the orator, his black hair stubborn and his jet-black eyes seeming to flash fire

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when aroused. He would rise in the pulpit in a non chalant manner, start off as if lacking words, or scarcely knowing what to say. Like Paul he reasoned. He would formulate his premises, develop his syllogisms, unfold his argument, and then as you were settling down to a quiet nap he would flash out some great truth with an unexpectedness that would startle you and you would never again so much as felt drowsy as long as he continued to talk. The lawyers were fond of him...they admired his close reasoning. He was the model chosen and copied by many of the young preachers.²¹

The 1850 Annual Conference renamed the Rockingham Circuit the Wentworth Circuit and placed it in the Greensboro District.²²

THE ANTEBELLUM AND POSTWAR YEARS

We are left to conjecture as to what was going on in the Bethlehem Church in the years preceding and immediately following the Civil War. The church continued on the Wentworth Circuit with the pastor living in Wentworth. This was a fruitful period in the life of the Wentworth Circuit under the capable leadership of pastors such as Issac W. Avent, Alfred Norman, David Bruton, Clarendon Pepper and John W. Lewis. During the pastorate of Rev. Norman (1857-1859), who was among the most noted revivalists in the state of his day, church building projects at Wentworth and Leaksville were launched and a new shelter at Mount Carmel was constructed.²³

In December 1859 the Rev. David Rasbury Bruton (c.1829 - 1895) was assigned to the Wentworth Circuit. In January 1860 Bruton issued the circuit preaching schedule for the next month:

January	22	-	Mount Carmel
January	29	-	Leaksville
February	02	-	Wesley Chapel
February	03	-	Bethlehem
February	05	-	Wentworth

The Antebellum & Postwar Years

February	08	-	Shady Grove
February	10	-	Privilege
February	12	-	Madison
February	18	-	Salem
February	19	-	Lowe's
February	21	-	Penile
February	22	-	K.S. House
February	23	-	Union 24

Thirteen preaching points on a single charge was an overpowering burden to any one pastor. The Wentworth Circuit at this time covered all of Rockingham County. It is difficult to imagine in this day and age that any church could grow with services only once or twice a month yet that is what happened to the charges on the Wentworth Circuit. At the 1861 Annual Conference the Wentworth Circuit was ordered divided along the Dan River. The churches north of the river were placed in the new Madison Circuit and Rev. Bruton was appointed to pastor those churches. The churches on the southern side of the river remained as the Wentworth Circuit with the Rev. Clarendon Martin Pepper (1830 - 1895) as the new pastor. This left the Bethlehem Church on the Wentworth Circuit with Mount Carmel, Wentworth, Penile, Salem, Union and other points. The "extensive revivals of religion" led by Pepper added an unprecedented 152 members to the circuit roll in just one year (1862) $-1863)^{25}$

During the pastorate of Rev. John W. Lewis (1808 - 1885), who served from 1868 - 1872, churches were organized at Ruffin and Pelham and efforts to establish a church at Reidsville were undertaken. Rev. Lewis, whose wife was Theresa Edwards the daughter of Rev. George Edwards from Mount Carmel, was very popular and worked effectively among his parishioners.²⁶

Rev. Lewis was followed by Rev. William Capers Norman (1849-1902) who was appointed in late 1872. William C. Norman was the son of Rev. Alfred Norman. Young Norman quickly amassed as excellent and widespread a reputation as had his father for his

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evangelistic endeavors. In the fall of 1873 Norman conducted a successful revival at Bethlehem and was assisted by the gifted Rev. Frank Lewis Reid (son of Rev. Numa F. Reid) and by the Rev. John H. Anderson, a local pastor from the Mount Carmel Church. By late 1873 the "parsonage" for the Wentworth Circuit was moved to Ruffin where it remained for the next several years.²⁷

While he was never officially appointed by conference to serve a pastorate in the county, Rev. John H. Anderson (1826 - 1901) played an important role in the development of Bethlehem and Mount Carmel churches. The son and grandson of Virginia ministers, Anderson and his wife, the former Lucy Carter, together with their several children resided on a large farm on the south side of Dan River opposite the present Draper section of Eden. By 1873 John H. Anderson was a local pastor on the Wentworth Circuit. The duties of such a position usually centered upon assisting with revivals, substituting for ill pastors and serving as a supply when the regular pastor was overburdened with preaching appointments. In all these categories Rev. Anderson served many Methodist congregations in the eastern half of Rockingham County. He is credited with organizing Bethlehem first recorded Sunday School class in 1880. Rev. Anderson's great-grandson, Mr. Francis I. Anderson of Greensboro, NC who has done extensive research on the Anderson family, once wrote that.....

One of John H. Anderson's daughters...related to the writer (Francis Anderson) during childhood that John H. Anderson was unable to perform hard physical labor, but employed many workers for the farming operations. She said that he composed many of his sermons while walking the road at night, and contrary to the prevailing custom of the time, did not believe in great religious demonstrations. He was said to have lost many friends by one sermon when he preached against the custom of "shouting" at Mount Carmel (Church).²⁸

The Antebellum & Postwar Years

The following is the monthly preaching schedule for the Wentworth Circuit during the pastorate of Rev. W. C. Norman (1872 - 1875):

1st Sunday	Mount Carmel Bethlehem	
2nd Sunday	Lowe's	
3rd Sunday	Reidsville	
v	Ruffin	
54h Carados	Pelham	71
əm əunday	Lawsonville(Penile) .	II:00 AM

This preaching schedule continued as such until the early 1880's.

The 1875 Annual Conference sent Rev. Robah Fidus Bumpas (1850 - 1933) to the Wentworth Circuit for the year 1876. The son of a Methodist minister, Robah Bumpas quickly became popular and was able to continue the progress made by Revs. Lewis and Norman. Rev. Bumpas' diary which covers the first half of the year he spent on the Wentworth Circuit recorded a few of the many visits to the Bethlehem community:

SUNDAY JANUARY 2, 1876 - preached with fine success to a large congregation at 11 AM at Mount Carmel. Drove on to Bethlehem. Congregation (there) not as large. Listened very well.

MONDAY JANUARY 3, 1876 - Left Mr. James Moore's this morning. Went over and spent the day with his son Bro. John Moore. We had a delightful dinner, a very pleasant day.... they treated us very kindly. Think we left the odor of a sweet influence behind.

SUNDAY JULY 2, 1876 - Started this morning for Carmel. Preached at 11 AM. Went to Bro. Fred Ellington's for dinner then to Bethlehem, where I preached. Spent the night with Capt. Jim Moore.³⁰

Rev. Bumpas was, succeed by Rev. VanBuren Albright Sharpe (1834 - 1894) in early 1877. Sharpe was a constant submitter to the RALEIGH CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE, the organ of the North Carolina Conference. His writings give us a good picture of the status and activities of the Wentworth Circuit from 1877 - 1881. During the Sharpe pastorate the first Methodist Church building in Reidsville was constructed and dedicated in 1878, the cornerstone for the new Lowe's Church was laid in 1880, the new church at Mount Carmel was dedicated in 1879 and in 1880 the Bethlehem Church was renovated. Rev. Sharpe's letters to the ADVOCATE tell us that Bethlehem was an active congregation:³¹

- SEPTEMBER 12, 1877 (issue) At Bethlehem we closed a most interesting meeting yesterday (August 22) of 6 days. There were 5 conversions and eight accessions to the church.
- OCTOBER 3, 1877 Our 4th Quarterly Meeting was held at Bethlehem 4...conversions and 6 added to the church.
- DECEMBER 25, 1878 (The recent revival at Bethlehem was) one of great power. Eight were brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus and about the same number into the church. Progress has been MARKED at this church in the last two years.
- SEPTEMBER 1, 1880 (At) Bethlehem...we had a most excellent meeting though the rains broke us up. There were 7 conversions and promises of much more if we could have continued. Here our church is being completely renovated and will be, when done, a capital house.

NOVEMBER 10, 1880 - At Bethlehem we had a profitable time, preaching several days and rededicating their newly fixed up church. Having done it on \$260.00 worth of work, they now have a beautiful and comfortable place of worship

While the details of the 1880 renovation of Bethlehem Church are not known it can be assumed that the extent of the project was confined to painting, carpeting, repairs and possibly new light fixtures.

By 1881 the Ruffin and Reidsville congregations, especially the latter, were demanding more pastoral attention from one who had seven or eight churches to pastor. Obviously the Wentworth Circuit had become too unwiedly for any one pastor and at the 1881 Annual Conference the Wentworth Circuit was replaced and divided into two smaller charges. The new Ruffin Circuit was composed of the Ruffin, Bethlehem, Mount Carmel and Pelham churches while the new Reidsville Circuit was composed of the Reidsville, Wentworth, Penile and Lowe's churches.

The Rev. Nereus E. Coltrane was appointed to the Ruffin Circuit for the year 1882. During the Coltrane pastorate the circuit membership topped 450 while the pastor's salary was approximately \$600.00. The earliest surviving records for the Bethlehem Church date from the Coltrane pastorate though in somewhat scattered form. Now the church itself was having quarterly conferences at which time reports from church officials were given. The following is an excerpt from the earliest recorded church conference held at Bethlehem on September 16, 1883:

BETHLEHEM

Church conference was preceded, with the regular service by Rev. N. E. Coltrane, Preacher in charge.

Preacher in charge reports since last church conference a good condition with the membership. A protracted service which resulted in much good and awakening and converting souls. The

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pastor has also done a good deal of visiting. The following have been received in full connection in our church at our protracted service in August: Minerva F. Roach, James Ellington.

Charge Leaders report that the time has been mostly occupied in protracted meetings and but little has been done. The 4th Sunday is the day for the next meeting.

Sunday School Superintendent reports twenty three scholars. Two Bible Classes and one infant class. The Sunday School literature is used in part, school is improving.........

The assessment....and other collections ordered by the Annual Conference are twenty nine dollars. (Of which) fifteen dollars and fifty cents..has been paid, eight dollars...subscribed and the prospect good for the remainder.

Remainder of the business postponed

Jno.R. Moore, Secretary³³

At the church conference held on September 20, 1884, Rev. Coltrane reported that the Bethlehem Church was in "active condition" except for the Sunday School. The membership stood at sixty. The amount of the circuit pastor's and the district presiding elder's salaries apportioned to Bethlehem for the conference year 1885 was \$135.00. The following is a list of contributors to that amount:

JNO. R. MOORE	\$12.00	N. J. BURTON	\$ 1.00
W. B. MOORE	\$10.00	J. A. MOBLEY	\$ 1.00
J. W. MOORE	\$ 5.00	R. A. MOIR	\$15.00
J. M. BURTON	\$ 2.00	JOHN (BENNETT?)	\$ 2.00
G. H. MOORE	\$15.00	R. P. MOORE	\$ 2.50
E. P. RICHARDSON	\$ 2.50	MARY MEADOR	\$ 1.00
J. S. WILSON	\$15.00	A. E. MOBLEY	\$ 2.50
JAS. P. ELLINGTON	\$ 2.00	J. P. WALKER	\$ 1.00
J. T. ELLINGTON	\$ 5.00	DAVID CARTER	\$ 1.00
E. N. ANDERSON	\$15.00	W. R. SAUNDERS	\$ 5.00
R. A. MOIR	\$ 2.00	J. R. MOORE	\$ 1.00
L. HOUCHINS	\$ 1.50	JO CHILTON	\$ 1.00

JACOB DIXON \$ 1.00 COLLECTIONS \$ 9.00 Total \$135.00³⁴

BETHLEHEM'S "EARTHQUAKE REVIVAL" OF 1886

In 1885 the Rev. Robert Graham Barrett, who had served the Wentworth Circuit almost twenty years ago, returned to Rockingham County to pastor the Ruffin Circuit. Annual Conference that year abolished the Reidsville Circuit, placing Lowe's and Penile on the Ruffin Circuit. The Reidsville (by 1890 known as Main Street Church) was granted station status with its own pastor while the Wentworth Church was placed on the Madison Circuit. Annual Conference placed Wentworth on the Ruffin Circuit in 1887.³⁵

During the last week of August 1886, Rev. Barrett conducted a protracted meeting at Bethlehem. On the very warm evening of August 31 at about 9:45 PM an earthquake shook the southeastern part of the United States, centering upon Charleston, South Carolina where several people were killed. The mighty force of the earthquake was distinctly felt in Rockingham County where a "calamitous" hailstorm in the Bethlehem area coincided with the tremor. Meanwhile the revival service was in progress at the Bethlehem Church. According to local tradition, the minister, Rev. Barrett, was disturbed that the oven-like atmosphere of the sanctuary had made his congregation somewhat less than attentive and no doubt some were catching up on their sleep. Therefore, Rev. Barrett asked a member of the congregation to lead the group in prayer and to pray to the Lord to awaken His followers to hear His word The gentleman (whose name is not definitely known) got down on his knees and prayed for the Lord to awaken His followers to hear His word. Supposedly, at about that moment the earthquake struck and the combined force with the hailstorm placed the congregation and community into instant panic.³⁶ Many thought that surely Judgement Day was at hand. It has been said that the lights in the sanctuary swayed over the heads of the worshippers and that many of the

horses tied in the church driveway bolted.³⁷

One can only imagine the panic and fear that griped the congregation. The mere resemblance of peace and tranquility within the congregation was not restored until Mrs. Annie M. Jones, the wife of local school teacher R. P. Jones (a leader in the Wentworth Church) rose from her seat and chided the congregation, now in panic, by stating that the Bible called for the day of Judgement to begin on the dawning of the day-not in the evening! Order was once again restored and the service concluded with the unexpected appearance of many "backsliders" who showed up at Bethlehem's altar seeking salvation in the light of an otherwise certain doom. Consequently the 1886 earthquake and hailstorm have been proclaimed the most fruitful ones in the annals of Rockingham County history.³⁸

The Rev. George F. Round was assigned to the Ruffin Circuit for the year 1887. The circuit membership at this time was at its highest yet-509. In the fall of 1887 Rev. Round transferred to the Oregon Conference and in early October Rev. John H. Anderson was selected to act as supply pastor at Bethlehem for the remainder of the conference year. That Rev. Anderson served in the same capacity at the other Ruffin Circuit churches is uncertain.³⁹

The Ruffin Circuit was signally blessed by the appointment of Rev. Robert Preston Troy for the year 1888. Rev. Troy had just completed a successful pastorate on the adjacent Madison Circuit. Troy, who was one of the most powerful revivalists in the North Carolina Conference, was able to inject new and zealous energy into all seven churches on the Ruffin Circuit.

In late 1887. Troy issued the following preaching schedule to begin in January 1888:

First Sunday Mount Carmel 11:00 AM Wentworth . . . 6:30 PM

Second Sunday Bethlehem . . . 11:00 AM

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Third Sunday Lowe's 11:00 AM

Fourth Sunday Pelham 11:00 AM

Ruffin 6:30 PM

Fifth Sunday Penile 11:00 AM 40

A NEW CONFERENCE AND A NEW SANCTUARY FOR BETHLEHEM CHURCH

In 1890 the North Carolina Conference was divided nearly in half. All churches south and west of Rockingham County were placed in the new Western North Carolina Conference. At this time the adjoining Madison and Ruffin circuits were realigned so that an additional circuit was formed. The new Leaksville Circuit was composed of the Leaksville, Bethlehem, Wentworth, and Wesley Chapel (between Wentworth and Stoneville) churches. This circuit was placed in the Winston District of the new conference and was pastored by the Rev. Joseph Carson Thomas.⁴¹ The official roll of members of the Leaksville Circuit Quarterly Conference for the year 1891 contained the following:

REV. D. E. FIELD(local preacher)
J. H. LANE
J. H. THOMAS
J. R. MOORE
W. B. MOORE
J. J. RATLIFFE
W. J. CORUM
G. H. MOORE
R. J. HARRISON
R. A. MOIR⁴²
WILLIAM A. CARROLL

One of the oldest surviving records of Methodist churches in Rockingham County is a quarterly conference minute book for the Leaksville Circuit for the year 1891. This record book which was used even after the Leaksville Circuit was abolished in late 1891 and replaced by the new Wentworth Circuit, is a most valuable source

of information, most of which is not found in any other source. This record book gives us a better view of the status of the Bethlehem Church during the early 1890's than was had previously. During the pastorate of Rev. Thomas, who suffered from ill health that would result in his retirement from the ministry, much emphasis was placed upon building up the Sunday Schools in the churches. Bethlehem had an active Sunday School during 1891, opening in April and continuing through the spring, summer and fall. In those days Sunday School in most rural churches did not usually operate during the winter months due to the bad weather. John R. Moore was the Superintendent of the Bethlehem classes during these years. As there was not an abundance of young people in the Bethlehem area, growth in the Sunday School was moderate. During the spring of 1891 a Sunday School was started at the Saunders School, a few miles south of Bethlehem, James H. Thomas of the Bethlehem Church served as superintendent of the fledgling class which lasted several years. 43

1891 was a landmark year in the history of Bethlehem Church. The congregation felt that the time had come to replace the 1835 sanctuary with a newer and larger one. Between June and August 1891 the Bethlehem Church Conference voted to go ahead with plans to build a new church. The decision was formally announced at the Leaksville Circuit Quarterly Conference held at Bethlehem on August 29, 1891. A building committee was duly appointed with J. S. Wilson, J. R. Moore, J. J. Ratliffe, E. N. Anderson, and G. H. Moore serving. The Bethlehem trustees were assigned the responsibility of selling the 1835 sanctuary and to encourage the construction of the new building.⁴⁴

Unfortunately, the records concerning the building of the new church are lost and few details surround the actual project. The contract was awarded to J. M. Hopper and Associates of Leaksville, a company that built more churches in Rockingham County than any other known firm. Work likely began in the fall of 1891 though it is not known for certain. The site for the new church was west of the existing building, located on the old Leaksville road on the top

A New Conference and A New Sanctuary for Bethlehem Church

of a prominent knoll. Construction on the frame building, supported by brick pillars, continued into 1892 with many church members aiding in the task. Trustees for the Bethlehem Church were appointed to handle the job of disposing the old sanctuary. The trustees were:

William B. Moore E. N. Anderson William H. Corum J. R. Moore J. J. Ratliffe R.A. Moir George H. Moore John S. Wilson James H. Thomas

By March 14, 1892 the trustees, of whom John S. Wilson was made chairman, had met with the Public School Committee for Rockingham County School District number 17 (basically the Bethlehem School district) and came to an agreement whereby the school committee would buy the old church and a certain amount of land for two hundred dollars. The old church would then be used for the Bethlehem School.

By late March 1892 the new church was nearly complete as the congregation quickly raised the funds needed to pay off the debt in order for the new building to be dedicated in accordance with church policy. The cost of the building was \$1200.00, nearly half of which came from the following members:

E. N. Anderson \$100.00	J. F. Moore	\$ 10.00
J. J. Ratliffe \$100.00	Thomas A. Moore	\$ 5.00
W. F. Moore \$ 25.00	G. H. Moore	\$100.00
J. M. Burton \$ 10.00	J. R. Moore	\$ 50.00
W. B. Moore \$100.00	W. G. Ellington	\$ 10.00 ⁴⁵
J. S. Wilson \$ 50.00	_	

May 29, 1892, a fifth Sunday, was set aside for the dedication of the new church. The Rev. V. A. Sharpe, pastor of the Granville Circuit of the North Carolina Conference and pastor of Bethlehem from 1877 - 1881, was invited to dedicate the church. Two services

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were held that day: the morning dedication service and the afternoon program for the children of the church. In spite of the rain on May 29 the dedication was a success and the new Bethlehem Church was free of all debts!⁴⁶

With a new building now in use the old church could finally be disposed. Consequently on July 11, 1892 the Bethlehem Church trustees sold to the local public school committee (George H. Moore, T. A. Mitchell and J. S. Wilson) the 1835 church and a tract of land adjoining the John A. Ratliffe Estate and the George Moore property was sold for two hundred dollars. The tract sold was described as follows:

Beginning at a pine due north 8 poles, thence west 20 poles, thence south 8 poles to a rock, thence east 20 poles to the beginning, this being the land on which the old church at Bethlehem now stands. It is further agreed by the....Board of Trustees and aforesaid School Committee that the church shall be used as a public schoolhouse and it is further agreed that the old church ...shall not be used for any other purpose.⁴⁷

With the building project behind them now, the Bethlehem congregation now focused its energies upon strengthening its fold. Meanwhile the 1891 Annual Conference eliminated the Leaksville Circuit for reasons unknown. Leaksville and Wesley's Chapel churches were returned to the Madison Circuit. Rather than returning Bethlehem and Wentworth to the Ruffin Circuit, which was a large enough circuit as it was, the Annual Conference recreated the Wentworth Circuit. Wentworth and Bethlehem formed the nucleus of this new charge with the addition of the struggling Penile Church, east of Reidsville, formerly of the Ruffin Circuit. In early 1892 the Hickory Grove congregation, northwest of Ruffin, was organized and for reasons unclear was placed on the Wentworth Circuit instead of the much closer by Ruffin Circuit. So by the spring of 1892 the Wentworth Circuit was composed of two strong rural churches and two smaller ones. The circuit covered such a considerable portion of

the county that only a hardworking and dedicated minister could achieve success in formulating a strong united charge.⁴⁸

Such a capable and dedicated pastor was assigned to the Wentworth Circuit for the year 1892. William Fletcher Womble (1859 - 1929), on his first actual charge as a minister, came to the new circuit with his wife (the former Olivia Snipes) and his two sons Bunyan and Kennon (d.1899). As the circuit had no parsonage in actuality the Wombles settled in Wentworth in a house on East Main Street that later was known as the Dr. Samuel B. Ellington residence. In early 1894 the Wombles moved into the old Mebane residence next door to the Wentworth Church, which was many years prior to that the Wentworth Circuit parsonage. The energy and zeal that Rev. Womble brought to the Wentworth Circuit was contagious. In 1892 the circuit membership stood at 223 and the pastor's salary was \$200.00. In 1895 those figures stood at 535 and \$478.00! At once Womble began a series of protracted meetings at every church on the Wentworth Circuit. Collections also increased. Between the months of March and July 1892 \$42.75 was raised from the circuit for the support of the ministry - \$15.00 going to the district presiding elder and \$27.75 going to the circuit minister.49

The Bethlehem Church thrived under the guiding hand of Rev. Womble and through the existing copies of local papers of the day we can tell that it was an active congregation:

August 26, 1892 (<u>REIDSVILLE REVIEW</u>) - Quite a large revival has been in progress at Bethlehem near here for the past week. No doubt there has been a great deal of good done. There must have been a superabundance of provisions for the inner man, for it is related of a poor penitent under conviction that when the minister asked him: "Brother how do you feel?" he replied; "Tolerably moderate I thank you 'scusin a right smart pain in my 'stumick'. How do you feel?"

August 4, 1893 - Quite a successful revival has been in progress for the past week at Bethlehem Church.....under the leadership of

- the pastor Rev W. F. Womble who was assisted by Revs. Anderson, Brower (of the Ruffin Circuit) and Ware (of Reidsville's Main Street Church). (WEBSTER'S WEEKLY)
- August 31, 1894 The Bethlehem Sunday School picnic which was to be held at the (Wentworth) Mineral Springs was not such an enjoyable affair, as the dinner for some reason failed to show up and it is needless to add that Walter Crafton, for one, was sadly disappointed. (WEBSTER'S WEEKLY)
- October 12, 1894 The Bethlehem Sunday School picnicked at the church last Friday. All the teachers, scholars, parents, and friends had a rollicking good time. These neighborhood gatherings after the busy season is over have a wholesome effect upon us. (REVIEW)
- November 23, 1894 The young people of the Bethlehem congregation have got in a marrying notion. Mr. Frank Dallas and Miss Polly Thomas were married a few days ago and now the news comes of two more... for December. Congratulations to all. (REVIEW)
- August 16, 1895 Saturday last was a red letter day for the Methodist children of the Wentworth Circuit and also for the members of the families belonging to this denomination church, as it was the Sabbath-Schools' Children's Annual Meeting and the affair came off at Bethlehem Church....it being also the quarterly conference of this circuit. Rev. Mr. Carraway (a noted minister in the conference) was there and after an excellent and practical address to the little ones, which also suited the big folks, the meeting took a recess in which the children entertained themselves and their mamas and everybody else. The church held their regular quarterly conference. The business was transacted in a satisfactory manner, after which the children entertained all by their songs and recitations which showed great care and improvement made since last meeting. The crowd was as large as a Bethlehem picnic or a quarterly meeting on Sunday always draws....(REVIEW)

A New Conference and A New Sanctuary for Bethlehem Church

The Annual Conference of 1892 brought more changes to the Wentworth Circuit. Penile Church and Mount Carmel, the latter on the Ruffin Circuit, exchanged places so that the Wentworth Circuit was now composed of Wentworth, Bethlehem, Hickory Grove, and Mount Carmel. No changes were made in the circuit at the 1893 conference for the year 1894. In January 1894 the following were appointed stewards of the Wentworth Circuit:

Richard J. Harrison William A. Carrol George H. Moore James J. Ratliffe James H. Thomas John Moore C. M. Robertson J. H. Jeffreys J. W. Dixon
George E. Barber
W. T. Hagood
W. R. French
J. Willie Jarrett
J. M. Wilson
William T. Williams
W. H. Schoolfield 56

At the fourth quarterly conference for the year 1894 which was held at Wentworth on October 9, Rev. Womble announced that:

There have been seven Sunday Schools on the circuit during the year with an average attendance of fifty officers and teachers and three hundred and seventy seven scholars. One of the schools has suspended for the winter. The others are still running and some of them are doing very good work. Others are doing reasonably well...We have organized two Epworth Leagues - one at Bethlehem with thirty members and (one) at Mount Carmel with thirty two.⁵¹

The Epworth League at Bethlehem was short lived no doubt due to the constant shortage of young people in the congregation. The Wentworth Circuit stewards from the Bethlehem Church in 1895 were:

George H. Moore J. R. Moore Calvin W. Mobley.⁵² J. J. Ratliffe J. H. Thomas The Annual Conference of 1894 made the last change in the Wentworth Circuit for the next two decades. The Salem Church, which was reopened and reorganized in 1891 and since that was on the Ruffin Circuit, was moved to the Wentworth Circuit while the Hickory Grove Church was moved to the Ruffin Circuit, no doubt for geographical reasons. The Womble pastorate came to the end of the customary four year existence in late 1895. Few pastors in the history of the Wentworth Circuit had endeared themselves so to their parishioners as had Rev. Womble. A local paper noted the close of the Wombles' stay:

Rev. W. F. Womble closed his work on this circuit last Sunday evening (November 24, 1895) at Bethlehem. A large congregation assembled to bid him good-bye. There was a church sociable at the parsonage last Monday evening at which the stewards on the circuit and their families were invited, presided over by Rev. Womble and his estimable lady.⁵³

A productive chapter in the life of the Wentworth Circuit had closed. In fact, some of the circuit's churches would never again be as strong as they were under the pastorate of Rev. Womble, who through family connections maintained a deep interest in the Bethlehem congregation until his death.

ENTERING A NEW CENTURY AND A NEW PARSONAGE

Unfortunately, less is known about Bethlehem Church during the early 1900's than during the last three decades of the previous century. The first two decades of the present century are between the time of written records and the limit of memories. No records of Bethlehem or for that matter the Wentworth Circuit from this time period have been located. Consequently, non-church sources can only give us a fragmentary picture of the activities of the Bethlehem

Entering A New Century and A New Parsonage

congregation. Almost the only records pertaining to the church and the circuit were published in the journals of the Western North Carolina Conference which lists Sunday School statistics, charge and conference apportionments, and pastoral appointments. The earliest membership register for Bethlehem in existence probably dates from the turn of the century and among those listed include members of the Moore, Ratliffe, Ellington, Corum, Williams, Thomas, Burton, and Anderson families.

The Rev. John McCollum Price (1863 - 1924) succeeded Rev. Womble to pastor the Wentworth Circuit in late 1895. Rev. Price was a worthy successor to Rev. Womble. During his four years at Bethlehem, Price added some forty people to the church membership. During the Price pastorate there were as many as eight Sunday Schools on the circuit. The pastor's annual salary averaged about \$410.00 during his pastorate, while the circuit membership ranged from 535 in 1895 to 577 in 1897. In July 1896 a mass meeting of the Wentworth Circuit Sunday School convened at the Salem Church with the Bethlehem School participating. Rev. Price was instrumental in organizing the affair with the aid of the conference president W. H. Schoolfield from the Salem Church and the conference secretary John R. Moore from Bethlehem. A crowd estimated between 600 and 1000 converged upon the "old and historic spot" at "Old Salem". 54

The 1899 Annual Conference assigned the Rev. Edward Jasper Poe (1864-1935) to the Wentworth Circuit. Poe was quite likely one of the most educated ministers ever appointed to the circuit. He was a graduate of Trinity College and Vanderbilt University "......and had the habit of reading from the Greek new Testament every day." It was during this pastorate that in August 1900 a windstorm caused some damage to the Bethlehem Church but the damage, whatever the extent, was soon repaired. 55

The housing of a new pastor had long been a problem for the Wentworth Circuit, especially since the ministers preferred to live in Wentworth for the most part. Wentworth being the small courthouse town that it was then, and still is, there was seldom a suitable house

for rent as a parsonage. Shortly after Rev Poe's arrival in late 1899 a local paper reported a news item from the county seat: "Our new preacher Rev. Mr. Poe is unable to secure a house in Wentworth as every dwelling there is occupied at present." It was at this time that talk began in earnest of building a new parsonage and while it seemed appropriate to locate the new parsonage in Wentworth the final decision was for it to be built in Reidsville, being a more central and impartial location. A lot was purchased on January 1, 1901 for \$200.00 paid by the circuit trustees:

W. T. Williams
John Moore
B. C. Smith
George J. Meador
Calvin W. Mobley

W. M. Gunn
J. H. Thomas
W. R. French
T. P. Burton

to Mr. & Mrs. William Lindsey, Mr. & Mrs. E. D. Watt, and Richard L. Ellington. The lot was located on the east side of Matlock (now North Scales Street) somewhat on the outskirts of town.⁵⁶

While the deed to the lot on Matlock Street was not formally recorded until 1901, the parsonage had already been built and completed. The Rev. Mr. Poe kept the readers of the *North Carolina Christian Advocate* informed as to the progress of the parsonage project:

May 16, 1900 - Rev. Sam P. Jones, the famed orator and evangelist will lecture in Reidsville on May 30 for the benefit of the Parsonage for the Wentworth Circuit. Admission fee will be \$.50, children one half price. Mr. Jones has never preached or lectured in Reidsville.

June 13, 1900 - We have bought a lot for a parsonage in Reidsville.

There is already a house begun on the lot. The lot was \$200.00.

We have raised about \$250.00 more than the lot, (and it) seems enough to finish up the house so we can occupy it this year, if not finish it up entirely. The ladies of Bethlehem presented us

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with an elegant quilt early in the year. Quite a number of nice hams and other presents made to us.

November 14, 1900 - We moved into our new parsonage in August. We have raised \$500.00 on it and expect to complete it early next year. It is on Matlock Street....Good women have made us nice quilts.

The plain two story frame parsonage was to be the home for the circuit ministers for the next six decades. The Rev. Wilbur Legette, who was appointed to the Wentworth Circuit in late 1900, was the first minister to live his entire pastorate in the new parsonage. Legette remained on the circuit for only one year. In late 1901, the Rev. Albert Sidney Raper (1868 - 1939) was appointed to the Wentworth Circuit and remained there for four successful years. ⁵⁷

BETHLEHEM ENTERS THE NEW CENTURY

When Rev. A. S. Raper was appointed to the Wentworth Circuit in 1901, the status of the circuit was quite sound. The four churches on the charge (Bethlehem, Wentworth, Salem and Mount Carmel) were all thriving congregations with a combined membership of well over five hundred. The pastor's salary averaged something over four hundred dollars per year. Rev. Raper was a greatly respected member of the Western North Carolina Conference, where he was noted for being "Youthful in vision and vitality....fervent in spirit, serving the Lord". Rev. Silas G. Strader of Eden, at ninety three in 1988, is probably the only living person with memory of Rev. Raper's pastorate on the Wentworth Circuit. Rev. Strader, who grew up in the Mount Carmel Church and later became one of the most respected and dedicated local pastors in the conference, recalled Rev. Raper as being an "...excellent and dedicated preacher who was very excitable and energetic."58 A local newspaper remarked that Raper "...is a hard worker and when there is an indebtedness on his circuit he goes around for collections

with determination and gets what he asks for."⁵⁹ Through Raper's efforts the indebtedness on the new circuit parsonage was paid for by the spring of 1902. When Raper lost his horse, members of the circuit and community contributed sums of money so that he could purchase another one. ⁶⁰

Rev. Raper's concern over a suitable parsonage for the circuit pastor is evidenced by the following insert in a Reidsville paper, dated June 26, 1903:

Rev. A. S. Raper of the Wentworth Circuit is very busy these days fixing up the new parsonage on North Scales Street. He has given it a nice coat of paint and put up a very pretty fence around the yard which has improved the appearance of the street considerably.

Rev. Raper added nearly thirty people to the roll at Bethlehem during his four year pastorate. He closed his pastorate in November 1905, preaching his farewell sermon at the Wentworth Church on November 5.61

Rev. Seymour Taylor (1868 - 1935) was appointed to the Wentworth Circuit at the 1905 Annual Conference. Taylor was a worthy successor to Raper and was generally well liked throughout the charge. In May 1907, Editor Blair of the *North Carolina Christian Advocate* was called to the Wentworth Circuit to assist Rev. Taylor. Blair wrote the following week:

Rev. Seymour Taylor, pastor of the Wentworth Circuit, has been disabled for some two or three weeks on account of an attack of measles...For this reason, the editor of the Advocate was summoned by the presiding elder last week to go to the help of Brother Taylor on Sunday. We gladly did so and visited two of the churches, preaching at Bethlehem in the morning, and at Mount Carmel in the afternoon.

We enjoyed the day and were glad to have the opportunity of making even a hurried visit to these charges. We found at both places the Sunday School in session just be fore the hour of preaching, consequently had the pleasure of preaching to a large portion of children and young

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people. More than ever before we saw the vast advantage of the child in the country church in this respect over that of the child in the city church. There (in the country) they invariably hear the sermon.

Mount Carmel is a great church with a great history, reaching back into the days of the pioneers. Bethlehem is not as old but has a good substantial membership. Our visit whetted the appetite to see more of these people.⁶²

For many years Bethlehem and Mount Carmel had worship services on the second and fourth Sundays: Bethlehem would have 11 AM and 3 PM services on the second and fourth Sundays respectively while Mount Carmel had services at 3 PM and 11 AM on second and fourth Sundays respectively. Rev. Silas Strader recalls that on the night before the fourth Sunday the Strader home would be "......the preacher's home. The preacher oftentimes would come to our home on Saturday evenings and spend the night. Then in the morning, he would go over to Mount Carmel and preach in the morning and after eating dinner in one of the members' homes would go over to Bethlehem and deliver the afternoon sermon. In those days it took much longer to get where you wanted to go--before cars came about."63

The 1908 Annual Conference was most generous in sending to the Wentworth Circuit, Rev. Alexander L. Aycock (1876 - 1943). Aycock was one of those rare ministers who could appeal to the upper class as well as the lower class of society. From a lowly sharecropper to a United States senator and North Carolina governor, Rev. Aycock had many friends. Rev. Strader, as a teenager, remembered Rev. Aycock as a caring pastor who "...didn't have much patience with people who talked out in the church during the sermon...Rev. Aycock had a fellow taken outside of the church at Mount Carmel one Sunday when the person wouldn't quit talking during the service." 64

During the last week of July 1909 a "gracious" revival was held at Bethlehem, said by many to have been the best in years. Rev. Aycock was ably assisted by former pastor Rev. A. S. Raper and as a result of the meeting thirteen people joined the church. Those thirteen people were:

George E. Somers Elosie Mobley W. M. Duncan Ed C. Moore J. L. Duncan Mary A. Wilson Mary Moore Nell A. Moore Bettie Dallas Frank C. Moore Arthur Burton J. R. Mobley T. Meador Moore

This revival greatly strengthened Bethlehem Church and its effects are still felt today. 65

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY AND "LIGHT BEARERS" ORGANIZE

It is indeed unfortunate that most of the early history of the Bethlehem's Women's Society is either lost or inaccessible. The Bethlehem society was organized in October 1909 by Mrs. Blanche Carr of Greensboro, with thirteen members. Miss Maude Moore (later Mrs. W. Ira Maynard) served as the first president of the society and served in that capacity for seven years. The first officers of the Bethlehem society were:

PRESIDENT MISS MAUDE MOORE
VICE PRESIDENT MRS. JOHN M. BURTON
SECRETARY MRS. J. I. ANDERSON
TREASURER MISS MATTIE THOMAS
66

Nothing related to the women's society at Bethlehem, during these first fifteen years has been uncovered by research. Not until the early 1920's do we have anything like an accurate picture of the society and their activities.

About 1910 a missionary society for girls was founded by Miss Maude Moore and others. It was known as the "Light Bearers". Little is known about this organization which lasted for several years. The names of the members of the "Light Bearers" are mostly unknown except for

the following: Nell Moore, Eloise Mobley, Lucile Moore, and Elizabeth Moore. The "Light Bearers" were active as late as 1914.⁶⁷

Under the leadership of Mrs. John T. Moore a very active fellowship known as the Young People's Aid Society flourished around 1916 - 1918.⁶⁸

An interesting revival was held at Bethlehem in August 1911 as reported by Rev. Aycock to the <u>Webster's Weekly</u> (September 15, 1911 issue):

On the first Sunday in August we began (a revival) at Bethlehem. (Former pastor) Bro. Womble did the preaching here from Monday until the meeting closed on Thursday evening. Our church here was greatly revived and many were quickened and helped in their christian experience. Three joined the church on profession of faith. Bro. Woosley and Womble did very excellent work in these meetings: in fact few could have done it better...Our Women's Foreign Missionary Society at Bethlehem is doing a fine work and we think will fill a long-felt need in the life of our church.

In late 1912, the Rev. A. J. Burrus (1860 - 1937) was appointed to succeed Rev. Aycock. A former public and private schoolteacher, Burrus "....possessed in a high degree the old fashioned virtues of honesty, integrity, fidelity and piety--and yet with such sympathy and meekness that it was such a joy to be associated with him in his work for humanity." Rev. A. Jack Burrus was perhaps more widely known for his distinctive physical characteristics than anything else, but his inherent caring qualities became well known to the people of the Bethlehem Church. The pastor's salary was eight hundred dollars for 1913--Burrus' first full year on the charge. 69

The Bethlehem Sunday School was doing good work with Mr. John J. Thomas as superintendent, Miss Lottie Burton as school secretary, and Miss Maude Moore, as assistant secretary. No rolls for the Bethlehem Sunday School are known to survive, but the secretary's register for the Sunday School during 1913-1914 does survive in private hands. The register provides the names of class teachers, amount of collections, and the lesson topics for each

Sunday. By this time the Bethlehem Sunday School was being carried into the winter months, so that it was now year round. Mr. J. F. Moore and Mrs. J. J. Ratliffe (nee Nellie Womble) taught the two classes in the senior department. Mr. Thomas A. Moore, Sr. taught the junior class while Miss Nannie Ratliffe taught the primary class. Miss Ratliffe served as organist for the Sunday School with Miss Nell Moore and Miss Nell Burton serving as substitute organist. Some of the entries in the secretary's register are very interesting:

- August 3, 1913 A motion was made that some of the people meet at the church the following Thursday P. M. to clear off the grounds and put the new carpet down (in) the church.
- August 10, 1913 Sunday School opened at 10:30 o'clock. Miss Nell Moore acted as organist in the absence of Miss N. Ratliffe.
- February 1, 1914 The Light Bearers' Society (meeting) was announced (but) it was postponed. Something was said about having a "Box Party" for benefit of the new organ.
- February 8, 1914 The Box Party took place Saturday night Feb. 7. The proceeds amounting to \$37.00 half of this to go the church and Sunday School for a new organ.
- March 1, 1914 Something was said of the Sunday School giving an entertainment (at) Easter for benefit of new organ.

Sunday School collections averaged around twenty five to thirty cents a Sunday, while the school membership held at around sixty five scholars. During the late 1800's Mr. Frank Moore (1867-1926) served as organist for the Bethlehem Church. He served for some thirty five years, playing as late as 1912. "Mr. Frank" was widely known throughout the Wentworth Circuit for his musical talent. In 1912 his niece Nell Moore, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. George H.

Moore, began serving as his substitute. Due to some illness "Mr. Frank" had one leg amputated, making his pumping the church organ impossible. Consequently, a little boy was secured to lie on his stomach under the organist's bench and pump the pedals that operated the organ's bellows and "Mr Frank" worked the keyboard as before. Little "Ben" Moore the eldest son of Mr. & Mrs. Thomas A. Moore, Sr., was often the one who did the "pumping" for his uncle. After Mr. Frank Moore resigned as organist, Miss Nannie Ratliffe, a sister of Mr. J. J. Ratliffe, served as organist. During this time Miss Nell Moore continued as substitute organist. A relative of "Miss Nannie" recalls that she had a lovely alto voice and when she played "The Old Rugged Cross" she would get so carried away that she would forget to pump the organ to the amusement of the children in the congregation.⁷¹

The church apparently acquired a new organ in 1914 to replace the one that had been used since as early as the 1890's. Upon her return from Davenport College, Miss Nell Moore became full time organist at Bethlehem Church. The church acquired its first piano in the winter of 1924-25 and Miss Moore (after her marriage in 1919 Mrs. J. Weldon Gammon) continued to serve the church as pianist, a position she held until her 89th birthday, January 29, 1989. The fate of the pump organ at Bethlehem after it was replaced with the piano is unknown.

The Rev. Thomas C. Jordan (1868 - 1939) came to the Wentworth Circuit in late 1914. The Annual Conference removed Mount Carmel from the circuit and replaced it with Lowe's Church in 1914. Mount Carmel then assumed the place of Lowe's on the Ruffin Circuit. The Mount Carmel congregation was especially unhappy with this change, so much so that the 1915 Annual Conference placed Mount Carmel back on the Wentworth Circuit. Lowe's was retained on the circuit which was now composed of Wentworth, Bethlehem, Salem, Carmel, and Lowe's. Five churches on a single circuit was thought to be too great a load for any one pastor, and attempts to arrange a suitable preaching schedule were unsuccessful.

Consequently, the 1917 Annual Conference placed Mount Carmel on the Draper Circuit where it remained until 1923 when it was returned to the Wentworth Circuit. Other than the name change to the Reidsville Circuit in 1932, no other realignments were made to this charge until 1956.⁷³

Rev. Jordan is remembered for his work with the young people and his encouraging them to unite with the church. At Bethlehem and at Wentworth Jordan was largely successful in that respect. In March 1915 alone he added eighteen to the roll at Wentworth and within that year he added twenty five to the roll at Bethlehem. Most of these additions were young people. Those who joined Bethlehem that year, 1915 included:

Walter Lawrence Williams
Jessie B. Carter
Edgar Price Thomas
Ernest G. Jarrell
Annie Norman Mobley
Minnie Lee Jarrell
Willie Frances Jarrell
Sam Ellington
William Seward King
Emma Keen Elllington
William Benjamin Moore
Esther Alcorn
Robert Dallas

Henry Grady Dallas
John Clarence Carter
James Wilson Moore
Elizabeth Frances Ellington
Ruth Ellington
Annie Bell Carter
Lucy Meador
Ernest Lee Fulcher
Edward Moore Anderson
William Ratliffe Anderson
Annie Alcorn
Sue Moll Alcorn

In 1916 Rev. Franklin Lafayette Townsend (1853 - 1926) was assigned to the Wentworth Circuit. Townsend was no stranger to Rockingham County as he had previously served the old Madison Circuit and the Leaksville Church with distinction. He completed his fortieth year in the active ministry in 1919. Rev. Townsend came from the "old school" of dedicated pastors. "No unworthy ambition ever stirred his breast...His preaching was warm and spiritual and proved constructive and helpful to his people." Mrs. Townsend

was an author of some note and was fondly remembered. Their son, Rev. Paul Townsend, who is a retired member of the Western North Carolina Conference, recalls his father's memory by citing a splendid verse of Shakespeare: "His life was gentle, and the elements so mixed in him, that Nature might stand up and say to all the world, This was a man!" ⁷⁶

The <u>Reidsville Review</u> of September 18, 1918 announced an important service in the life of the Bethlehem Church:

Next Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock there will be patriotic services at Bethlehem M. E. Church, which is located in the midst of the most prosperous and splendid type of people in this county. A service flag will be presented and accepted. This flag contains nine stars, one of them being a golden star signifying that one of the sons of the Bethlehem Church has made the supreme sacrifice. There will be good music and Bethlehem Church has always had a reputation for good music.

The actual service was reported in the September 27, edition of the *Review*:

The patriotic services at Bethlehem Church last Sunday were considered a success. They consisted of presentation and reception of a service flag in honor of the ...noble boys who enlisted from that church. Rev. F. L. Townsend, the pastor, presided over the exercises. Rev. J. H. Barnhardt, the presiding elder, made an excellent patriotic address. The flag was presented by Mr. J. F. Moore in a brief but beautiful address. It was received in behalf of the church in a charming address by Mr. Numa R. Ried of Wentworth. Several patriotic songs were splendidly rendered by the choir. A very large congregation was there to show their interest in the occasion. The service flag carries ... stars in honor of the ...enlisted men from the community.

Rev. Charles Fletcher Sherrill (1861 - 1933) followed Rev. Townsend in 1919. Sherrill, as was Rev. Townsend, was the son of a Methodist minister. A graduate of Randolph-Macon College, Sherrill was a noted veteran of the Western North Carolina Conference. Unfortunately, all local records of his pastorate on the Wentworth Circuit were lost or destroyed and little is known of his pastorate there. Since his work previous to and after his two year stay on the Wentworth Circuit was quite rewarding, his pastorate at Bethlehem was likely successful.⁷⁷

BETHLEHEM CHURCH IN THE 1920'S

The earliest records for the Wentworth Circuit date from the early 1890's. The next earliest records date from the early 1920's. About 1955 -1960 Mrs. Bettie Sue Gardner of Reidsville, an early leader of the Rockingham County Historical Society, abstracted the quarterly conference books for the Wentworth Circuit for 1921 -1937. Considerable data not found anywhere else was recorded in these books. Mrs. Gardner's abstracts have become extremely valuable since the original record books have since been destroyed. Thus, Mrs. Gardner deserves a great deal of thanks for her foresight and efforts in this matter.

As of December 17, 1921 there were 473 members in the four churches on the circuit: Wentworth, Bethlehem, Salem and Lowe's. The new pastor for the charge, Rev. Charles P. Goode (1867-1943) was warmly received by the quarterly conference. Sunday Schools in all four churches were coming along fine. Mr. Thomas A. Moore, Sr. was the superintendent of the Bethlehem Sunday School from 1915 to 1919, followed by John T. Moore in 1919, A. R. Williams in 1921 and J. I. Anderson in 1922. Mr. Moore reassumed the position in 1924 and retained it until he resigned in 1935. Rev. Goode and his family were quite popular on the circuit. His daughter, Olivia, taught classes at the Bethlehem Schoolhouse. The Bethlehem Women's Missionary Society continued to do good work

throughout this time. In January 1924 a committee was appointed to paint and otherwise beautify Bethlehem Church: J. J. Ratliffe, J. M. Burton, J. I. Anderson and Samuel Moir. This committee was to work with the ladies who were trying to raise \$50.00 to spruce up the interior of the sanctuary. In March 1924, Mrs. E. W. Pugh reported twenty eight members in the Bethlehem's Women's Society.⁷⁹

Rev. Charles Plato Goode was another in a long line of excellent ministers for the Wentworth Circuit. A native of Waco in Cleveland County, North Carolina, Goode was admitted into the Western North Carolina Conference in 1899 and served in the active ministry for thirty three years. He and his wife, the former Rhoda Weber, had five children. One of the children, Olivia, joined the Bethlehem Church and was principal at the Bethlehem School. The three other surviving children: Lois, Samuel, and Doree joined the Salem Church.⁸⁰

As stated before, the Women's Society at Bethlehem continued to be quite active through the 1920's. In the spring of 1924 the society purchased new pulpit furniture for the church, as part of a minor "sprucing up" project there for which was spent over \$550.00. The ladies at Bethlehem were no doubt responsible in part for the first piano for the church, purchased in 1925. In the summer of 1925 the Women's Society purchased an individual communion service for the church.⁸¹

After a rather successful ministry on the circuit for four years, Rev. Goode was reassigned in late 1925 and the Rev. J. Thomas Ratledge (1868 - 1939) came to the charge. Rev. Ratledge immediately endeared himself to the people in all five churches. A colleague of Ratledge's once wrote of him that:

As a preacher, Brother Ratledge was fearless and direct, and in his very simplicity profound. There are preachers whose countenance, whose spirit and whose very presence lend a majesty and meaning to the words that they cannot have from the lips of ordinary men; preachers whose utterances convince and convict

because of the character of the men themselves. Brother Ratledge was such a preacher! Men heard him and repented. Men heard him and believed. Men heard him and loved the lord. 82

Rev. Ratledge was felled by illness in 1927 and required the aid of a supply pastor. A student. Rev. Wade Kiker, served the circuit from May - October 1927. Ratledge recovered somewhat and completed three years on the Wentworth Circuit. Ratledge was an unpretentious pastor who appealed to young and old alike and he was therefore able to bring many new members into the churches on the circuit, especially Bethlehem, Lowe's and Mount Carmel.⁸³

It is during the pastorate of Rev. Ratledge that the earliest records for the Women's Society are known to exist, though in private hands. The following were the officers in the society in 1926:

PRESIDENT	MRS. J. I. ANDERSON
VICE-PRESIDENT	MRS. J. LUTHER BURTON
RECORDING SECRETARY	MRS. CHARLES F. BURTON
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY	MRS. ELLIS W. PUGH
TREASURER	MISS LOTTIE BURTON ⁸⁴

In October 1926 the society celebrated its anniversary and honored the memory of ten members who had died since the society's inception:

Annie Jarrett Moore Lena Moir Mobley Sallie Thomas Selina Barber Mr. Calvin Washington Mobley Emma Amos Burton Mary Womble Moore Sue Alcorn Mr J. R. Moore Mr. W. F. Moore

Men at times were made honorary members of the Women's Society as a gesture of appreciation for much service rendered to the church.⁸⁵

Rev. Ratledge was succeeded by Rev. W. Reid Harris (1892 -

Bethlehem Church in the 1920's

1967) in 1928. Harris was another minister whose "Down Home" approach won him many supporters. During the Harris pastorate the Bethlehem, Salem and Lowe's churches provided needed equipment and furniture for the parsonage, but, as it always was, the improvements were too little and usually too late. For nearly thirty years the circuit was the owner of a parsonage that was seldom suitable for occupancy by the poorest of people. Sagging and rotten floors, cracks and holes in the ceiling and walls, a leaky roof, inadequate plumbing in its worse terms, and inadequate heating in the winter were among the many problems that most every minister appointed to the circuit found upon arrival. Why the circuit never seemed greatly concerned over these conditions at the parsonage is unexplainable, and as the years passed these problems worsened.⁸⁶

During the pastorate of Rev. Harris the following was the preaching schedule for the Wentworth Circuit:

First Sunday	Wentworth Salem		
Second Sundays	Bethlehem	11:00 AM	
	Mount Carmel	3:00 PM	
Third Sundays	Lowe's	11:00 AM	
	Salem	3:00 PM	
Fourth Sundays	Mount Carmel	11:00 AM	
•	Bethlehem	3:00 PM	
	Wentworth	7:30 PM	
Fifth Sundays	Salem	11:00 AM	87

YEARS OF GROWTH AND TRANQUILITY THE PASTORATE OF REV. T. V. CROUSE 1930 - 1941

With the departure of Rev. W. R. Harris in 1930, the Annual Conference assigned Rev. Thomas V. Crouse (1875 - 1966) to the Wentworth Circuit, the name of which was changed to the Reidsville Circuit in 1932 much to the ire of the Wentworth congregation. Rev. Crouse was, without doubt, one of the most remarkable and dedicated ministers to have ever served a Methodist charge in Rockingham County. The son of a "very successful farmer" in Surry County, Crouse entered the ministry somewhat later in life than most. Crouse attended public and private schools in his youth and completed his education at the Pinnacle Academy in southwestern Stokes County. While a child Crouse knew that he should become a minister, and yet he kept such feelings to himself until he was forty at which time he made the decision to enter the ministry following a revival at Dobson, North Carolina. Rev. Crouse was assigned to various charges throughout the Western North Carolina Conference; some in the city and others in the primitive backwoods. In the 1940's Rev. Crouse wrote an interesting and inspiring autobiography in which he reflected upon his pastorate and career. Upon his appointment to the Wentworth (later Reidsville) Circuit, Rev. Crouse...

found plenty of hard work to do. That is always true, especially on country charges. I had five churches to serve. The churches and the parsonage were all badly in need of repair. I spent twelve hundred dollars on the parsonage. Paid a debt for street work in front of the parsonage to the amount of five or six hundred dollars, that had been standing for five years. I built Sunday School rooms to three largest churches (Lowe's, Mount Carmel and Bethlehem), and made repairs to the others (Salem and Wentworth). During the eleven years on the charge, I added to the church roll about five hundred members. I feel that I did my best work on this charge. I did many things in the eleven years

Years of Growth and Tranquility The Pastorate of Rev. T. V. Crouse 1930-1941

that could not have been done in three or four years..... I did my own preaching in all the churches the first year, as I always did, and in some of the churches I preached through three or four meetings, I always exchanged help with the other preachers; and during my ministry (so far) I have held about one hundred fifty meetings outside of my own charge...I left the Reidsville Circuit in good condition, and it is still going good. It makes a preacher feel good to know that his work is lasting.⁸⁸

The Depression brought hard times to the Reidsville Circuit, as well as to the rest of the country. At times the circuit was unable to come up with the full amount for the pastor's salary. Many pastors would have been unable to cope with such a situation. Rev. Crouse, however made it known that he could accept food and other necessities to make up the difference and he would report the salary as "paid in full" to the conference. Hams, eggs, canned fruits, and vegetables and wild game were among the "paid in full" items the parsonage received during those lean years.

Despite these spartan beginnings, the Crouse pastorate was a fruitful time in the lives of nearly every church on the Reidsville Circuit. Memberships and attendances increased greatly and a sense of tranquility pervaded the circuit that seldom had existed before or since. Crouse was a great mixer with people and had a great love and understanding of the rural church and the activities thereof. He was a great hunter, especially of wild turkey, which afforded a chance of providing food for his family and for fellowship with other hunters. In essence, Rev. Crouse was just who the Reidsville Circuit and the Bethlehem Church needed at the time. 89

Even as late as the 1930's chief hindrances to the circuit pastor continued to be poor roads, bad weather, and sickness.

The three largest churches on the circuit, Lowe's, Mount Carmel, and Bethlehem, seemed to experience good and steady growth during these years. While Rev. Crouse was unable to participate in many church school activities, these churches had growing classes

under capable leadership. For many years, Mr. Thomas A. Moore, Sr. served as Sunday School Superintendent at Bethlehem in addition to teaching the Men's Bible Class. In early November 1935, Mr. Moore resigned as superintendent after many years of service in that capacity. The Bethlehem Sunday School presented Moore with a Bible as a token of appreciation. Mr. Ralph R. Williams, who had succeeded Moore as superintendent, made the presentation. Williams, with his mother and sisters, moved to the Bethlehem community from the Mount Carmel Church and community in February of 1935. Williams served as superintendent until 1937 when Thomas A. Moore, Jr. was appointed. 90

Very little in the way of records exist for the Bethlehem Church during the 1930's and 1940's. Consequently, the most important sources of information related to the church are the weekly articles by Mrs. E. W. Pugh (nee Florence Moore) who reported on the Bethlehem community news for the *Leaksville News*. Judging by her articles, little went on in the community without the knowledge of Mrs. Pugh. It is to her credit almost solely that we know what went on within the Bethlehem Church. A sample of her reporting noted a church social held at Bethlehem in early August 1932;

A delightful church social was held last Wednesday evening from 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM on the lawn of the local Methodist church, with a large crowd of young people as well as adults in attendance. Informal old fashioned games were enjoyed throughout the evening. Delicious ice cream and various kinds of homemade cake was served from a long table out in the grove, this being a pleasing feature of the occasion. The affair was sponsored by the Sunday School of Bethlehem M. E. Church. 91

In February 1933 the Young People's Class at Bethlehem was reorganized with Mr. Allen C. Burton as teacher. Thomas A. Moore, Jr. was elected president of the class with Jesse M. Burton elected to serve as secretary and treasurer. This class was to grow quite quickly and was responsible for the organization of a Young People's

Years of Growth and Tranquility The Pastorate of Rev. T. V. Crouse 1930-1941

Division in the winter of 1934. Little is known about the early years of this worthy organization, which was commonly known as the Epworth League. The officer's of the Bethlehem Young People's Division in 1935 - 36 were:

PRESIDENT	LOUISE ANDERSON
VICE-PRESIDENT	OTIS POWELL
SECRETARY	MARY WILLIAMS
TREASURER	FREDERICK GAMMON
REPORTER	LILLIE WILLIAMS 92

The Epworth League met in most churches on Sunday evenings for a worship, fellowship and devotional program. These programs consisted of songs, Bible reading, prayers, readings and an informal address made by one of the league. Jesse M. Burton, a youth leader in the Bethlehem Church, set forth goals of the local league:

- First To help achieve a vital relationship with Jesus as a personal saviour.
- Second To help young people grow as Christians. This can be done by Bible study, prayer and fellowship with other Christian young people.
- Third To help train young people for service in the world.

 Effective work is done only by trained workers. Training should begin early in life, so every young person should belong to a league.

The success of the Bethlehem league can be attested by the fact that many of the league's members continued to be active and dedicated members of the church, even to this very day!⁹³

Officers elected for the Bethlehem Young People in September 1938 were:

PRESIDENT	JESSE BURTON
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT	GLADIOLA THACKER
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT	MARY WILLIAMS
SECRETARY	MARY WILLIAMS
TREASURER	HELEN SAWYERS
RECREATION LEADER	OLIVIA MOORE 94

The Bethlehem League joined the Rockingham County Union of Methodist Young People in November 1937. One of the outstanding leaders of the county league was Jesse Burton of Bethlehem, who served as county league president and other similar positions with distinction.

In October 1939 the following were elected officers of the Bethlehem league:

PRESIDENT	MARY WILLIAMS
VICE PRESIDENT	RALPH WILLIAMS
SECRETARY	OLIVIA MOORE
TREASURER	HAYWOOD ROBERSTON
RECREATION LEADER	HELEN SAWYERS 95

The Epworth League continued to be active until the Second World War when the draft diminished its ranks. Still the group was largely responsible for a considerable part of the growth that Bethlehem experienced in the 1930's and 1940's.

Another high note for the Bethlehem Church that attracted a lot of attention was being the host church for the 24th Annual Greensboro District Singing Convention on September 12, 1933 led by Prof. A. M. Frentis. A grand picnic followed the occasion.⁹⁶

Picnics have long been associated with Bethlehem and good food has always been in abundance at any such gatherings. Homecomings at Bethlehem are especially noted for "dinner on the grounds". Homecomings have been held annually at Bethlehem on the second Sunday in July since prior to 1932.

The Ladies Missionary Society at Bethlehem Church was very active during these years as well. Mrs. Charles F. Burton (nee Ivey Moore) served as President of the society for several years during the Crouse pastorate. On October 15, 1932 the Bethlehem Ladies Missionary Society celebrated its anniversary at a "gala occasion" at the home of Mrs. J. Luther Burton. In 1932 the society reported 26 active members. In November 1935 the Missionary Society placed "a beautiful and artistic marker" (sign) on the church bearing the inscription: Bethlehem M. E. Church, South: Organized 1835". This sign was used on the front exterior wall of the church for many years. Now restored, the sign is properly displayed in the church vestibule. 97

The meetings of the Ladies Society usually consisted of a business session, followed by Bible readings, songs, special readings and a program presented usually by a member of the group. Most of these programs were about foreign lands and peoples and sometimes discussions on social issues were held. The ladies in most churches are the working backbone of the congregation. Bethlehem is a good example of that observation, especially in the days when most women did not have to do two jobs. The ladies were succesful for raising funds whenever needed, especially when repairs and improvements were needed at the parsonage.⁹⁸

THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF 1935

A great day of rejoicing in the Bethlehem Church was Sunday, August 11, 1935, the day that the congregation celebrated its one hundredth anniversary. Much time and labor was spent in preparation for this event, one of the first of its kind in a Methodist church in the county. Rev. Crouse took special interest in the preparation for this great occasion. Mrs. Nell Gammon, in her usual efficient manner, was in charge of the music for both the morning and afternoon services that day. The Rev. L. D. Thompson, the Presiding Elder of the Greensboro District, delivered the morning sermon, Mrs. Howard Lilly of Greensboro provided a beautiful rendition of "O Rest in

the Lord" from the famed oratorio "Elijah" by Felix Mendelssohn. Rev. Crouse extended the formal welcome to the congregation and Mr. Bunyan S. Womble of Winston-Salem, the son of Rev. W. F. Womble who pastored Bethlehem from 1891 - 1895, gave the response to the welcome. "Dinner on the Grounds" as never before graced the church lawn as scores of people, coming from all over the county, state and beyond, descended upon the venerable site. "9"

The eleven o'clock morning service on August 11 was followed by a powerful and inspiring afternoon service at one-thirty. Following an informal song service led by Mr. H. P. Holt, Mr. Ellis W. Pugh introduced the Hon. Henry P. Lane, local Superior Court judge, who delivered a detailed address on the history of Bethlehem Church. Judge Lane, who was probably the county's leading orator of the day, excelled to lofty and eloquent heights as only he could do in covering the glorious history of the Bethlehem Church. Judge Lane opened his remarks by saying:

To you who are here in love and reverence for those who have gone before and left you to this glorious heritage, I say to you children of Bethlehem, "Your Mother loves you still."

I am not an alien among you nor a stranger within your gates. I was brought to Bethlehem by my parents when I was five years old. On the original board of trustees are the names of my great great grandfather, my great grandfather, my step grandfather, my great great uncle and my great aunt married a son of the man who gave the land for the (first) church. Indeed, it is a hallowed spot for me.¹⁰⁰

Judge Lane provided many facts and stories surrounding the church and community, recalling many traditions that continue to be cherished by older members of the church today.

Following Judge Lane's oration, Rev. J. T. Ratledge who pastored the church from 1925 - 1928 was asked to share some of his personal recollections of his successful pastorate. Thanks and appreciation were

The Centennial Celebration of 1935

extended to those who had worked hard to make the day a success.

The trustees of Bethlehem Church for that year were:

E. W. Pugh
Frank Burton
J. I. Anderson

J. M. Burton J. J. Ratliffe

The Board of Stewards was composed of:

Thomas A. Moore, Sr. J. M. Burton
James H. Thomas
Ellis W. Pugh
Ernest Jarrell

J. J. Ratliffe
J. Luther Burton
E. C. Moore
T. Meador Moore

The festivities of August 11, 1935 would not be equalled at Bethlehem until the sesquicentennial celebration of 1985.

The unification of the three major branches of Methodism in 1939 into the Methodist Church affected the Bethlehem Church very little. Churches formerly of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South were by and large not greatly affected by the unification. The most notable change on the local church level was that the Ladies Missionary Society became known as the Women's Society of Christian Service. In many churches the ladies reorganized their groups according to the dictates of the Annual Conference. On September 18, 1940 the Bethlehem Ladies reorganized into the Women's Society of Christian Service and the following officers were elected:

PRESIDENT MRS. CHARLES F. BURTON VICE PRESIDENT MRS. ED C. MOORE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY . MRS. W. D. GAMMON RECORDING SECRETARY MISS GLADIOLA THACKER TREASURER MRS. J. LUTHER BURTON ASSISTANT TREASURER MISS LOTTIE BURTON

SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
and SOCIAL SERVICE MRS. J. E. FOIL
SECRETARY OF CHRISTIAN
SOCIAL RELATIONS MISS OLIVIA MOORE
SECRETARY OF CHRISTIAN
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Twenty charter members of the society were enrolled at this time. Since the Wentworth Church, then on the brink of collapse, did not have a ladies' society any longer four ladies from the Wentworth Church joined the Bethlehem Society: Mrs. Numa R. Reid, Mrs. Alvin Gunn (nee Nell Burton), Mrs. J. E. Foil, and Mrs. Mason Field. This practice by the Wentworth ladies continued through the 1930's and early 1940's. 103

Rev. Crouse was well known throughout the conference for his evangelistic capabilities, and all of his churches grew as a result of his successful protracted meetings. A landmark revival in the history of Bethlehem Church took place in July 1935 as reported by Mrs. E. W. Pugh in her weekly column:

A gracious revival of religion was held here beginning on July 7th and closing Sunday night the 14th. "The best meeting at Bethlehem for years," is the consensus of opinion. Mrs. C. L. Steidley, evangelist worker of High Point, came...and conducted every service during the entire week, preaching twice each day and also holding a short service each evening at 7:30 for the children...As a visible result of the revival, eleven fine young people have already joined the church. Three older people will also join by letter. 104

At times, the revivals on the circuit were not rigorously planned in advance as evidenced by a letter from Rev. Crouse to the <u>North Carolina Christian Advocate</u> in April 1940:

We have not arranged for help in two revival meetings to be held in July. If there are any preachers in the district who want to do some preaching in a country church, while eating plenty of fried chicken

Renovation of 1940

and country ham, I should like to have a talk with them at the (upcoming) district conference. 105

The annual revivals at Bethlehem and the other churches were greatly hampered by inadequate lighting in the sanctuary. The kerosene lamps of the Victorian era were hardly adequate in comparison with the electrical lighting fixtures of the modern age. In the summer of 1937 electric lights were installed in both the Bethlehem and Wentworth churches. By the time of the Second World War, Bethlehem Church was beginning to enter an era of gradual improvement in both its facilities and its leadership. 106

THE RENOVATION OF 1940

No doubt that the festivities of the 1935 Centennial celebration led many to believe that the 1892 sanctuary was in need of repair and enlargement. Sunday School rooms were in great need at Bethlehem. Lowe's and Mount Carmel had recently completed building classrooms, and though Rev. Crouse was unable to participate in many affairs of the Sunday Schools in all of his churches he was determined to see classrooms constructed at his third largest church. By the late 1930's the Bethlehem sanctuary was suffering from the same ills that fall upon any building nearly fifty years old. Termites had done damage to the floor in the sanctuary and the sanctuary was extremely difficult to heat adequately in the winter. 107

In late 1937 J. J. Ratliffe, a loyal member of the church, died and bequeathed \$1000.00 to the church to be used for building purposes. During the next two years the church raised funds to add to this amount. The church board voted to proceed with the renovation and building in early 1940 and by mid-January some of the lumber had already been brought to the site. In early February 1940, the foundation for the new addition was laid and the construction progressed rapidly under the supervision of Mr. Jim Carter, a local contractor who remodeled Mount Carmel Church in the late 1930's.

A number of men from the church joined in and furnished labor for the project. During late March and early April the sanctuary was remodeled. Hardwood floors were installed, the interior walls were plastered, a vaulted and lower ceiling made of composition material was installed, a choir loft behind the pulpit was built, the pews and other furniture were stained and painted in appropriate colors and the interior and exterior walls were painted white. During the second and third week of April 1940 a porch with a cement floor and brick trim was added to the front of the sancutary. Columns for the porch were added during the second week of May. 108

Other improvements, including carpet for the sanctuary isles, were added during 1940 also. Mr. Thomas A. Moore Sr., another long-time and dedicated member, served as chairman of the building committee. A great deal of labor was donated to the project thereby saving the church several hundred dollars. On April 28, 1940 the five new Sunday School rooms were used for the first time. Three rooms had been added to the rear of the sanctuary while one room each was added to the east and west sides of the church. To mark the occasion of the remodeling Mr. James Keen Ellington, one of the churches oldest members, presented the church with a beautiful handmade walnut communion table which he had made himself. The table was presented to the church on May 5, 1940 and was used for over thirty years. The table is now used in the vestibule of the present sanctuary. Mrs. J. S. Wilson presented a red velvet table cloth and piano scarf. 109

The entire renovation cost about \$2600.00. Apparently no formal dedication service was held, probably because the debt was so quickly liquidated.¹¹⁰

The Sunday School classrooms were in order for the first known Vacation Bible School at Bethlehem during the first week of July 1941. Mrs. J. O. Hines and Mrs. C. F. Burton served as teachers of the primary and intermediate classes respectively. Olivia Moore and Gladiola Thacker served as recreational and musical leaders respectively for the Bible School, the sessions of which were held in the

afternoon. The week of Bible School concluded with a picnic supper at the church.¹¹¹

BETHLEHEM'S INTERVAL YEARS, 1941 - 1963

The years between 1941 and 1963 were basically quiet ones in the life of the Bethlehem Church. No building as such went on at the church, and yet the face of the church was changing. Many of the "old timers" and their families were now passing out of sight and now a younger generation was coming forth from within the ranks to guide Bethlehem Church for the next forty years.

It was a surprise to the members of the Reidsville Circuit when Rev. T. V. Crouse was appointed to the nearby Haw River Circuit in 1941, as many had expected him to be returned for an unprecedented twelfth year on the charge. Reluctantly, the charge bid the Crouses farewell and welcome to the new pastor., Rev. Byron Shankle and his family. Rev. Shankle's aristocratic wife was the granddaughter of the noted Dr. Battle, a president of U. N. C. -Chapel Hill. Rev. Shankle (1901 - 1983), a Duke graduate, was admitted into full connection with the Western North Carolina Conference in 1935, becoming an elder in the conference in 1939. The Shankles arrived as the nation entered the Second World War. and to pastor a widespread charge during a time of gas rationing and numerous shortages. Yet, Rev. Shankle's comparatively short pastorate on the Reidsville Circuit was a satisfactory one. In the four largest churches on the circuit things were operating fairly well despite the drain on the congregation caused by the draft. At the fifth church, Wentworth, a politically inspired movement there had closed the doors of that sanctuary, but Rev. Shankle preached to a more or less union congregation at the local Presbyterian Church occasionally, sharing the pulpit with the Presbyterian minister who also pastored a circuit.¹¹²

Meanwhile, the Bethlehem Sunday School was being better organized and restructured. Following the resignation of Mr. Thomas

A. Moore, Jr. as school superintendent in September 1941, Mr. Claude Mobley was made his successor. The appointed officers of the Bethlehem Sunday School in 1941 were:

SUPERINTENDENT	CLAUDE MOBLEY
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT	JESSE M. BURTON
SECRETARY & TREASURER	LILLIAN WALKER
TEACHER OF MEN'S	
BIBLE CLASS	THOMAS A. MOORE, SR.
TEACHER OF YOUNG	
PEOPLE'S CLASS	MRS. W. D. GAMMON
TEACHER OF INTERMEDIATE	
CLASS	THOMAS A. MOORE, JR.
TEACHER OF PRIMARY	
CLASS	OLIVIA MOORE
	MRS. J. O. IIINES

In the fall of 1942 the Young People's Class at Bethlehem placed a beautiful service flag just above the altar with stars representing the men from the community who were serving in the armed forces. Many of the churches hardest workers found themselves scattered all over the world as a result of the war. Rev. Shankle expressed a deep interest in those from his churches who were serving in the armed forces and corresponded with many of them. At the end of some of his sermons, Shankle appealed to the congregation to buy more war bonds as an aid in bringing the war to a successful conclusion. 113

The 1943 Annual Conference sent Rev. J. Curtis Swaim to the Reidsville Circuit. A native of Kernersville and a Guilford College graduate, Rev. Swaim quickly became one of the most popular ministers in the county. His deep sense of duty and dignity were always appreciated in his churches. Through his efforts, the Wentworth Church was finally reopened and more frequent services were held there, and Rev. Swaim devoted a considerable part of his time in building up that church. Rev. Swaim was the first pastor to hold Vaca-

Bethlehem's Interval Years 1941 - 1963

tion Bible School in all five churches on the Reidsville Circuit. Many people still remember the trailer that Rev. Swaim would hitch to the back of his car in order to carry many children to Bible School.

Bible Schools were especially well attended at Mount Carmel where Rev. Swaim recalls as many as two hundred attending during one particular session.¹¹⁴

The Swaims made the best of a difficult situation when they arrived at the circuit parsonage. Mrs. Swaim was very talented with a needle and thread and made a lot of their children's clothes. Both Rev. and Mrs. Swaim recall the ordeals that came with every Sunday. They would leave the parsonage early in the morning and it would be night before they would return home. Preaching in the mornings, afternoons and evenings were grueling upon any pastor and yet Mr. Swaim handled the situation very well indeed.¹¹⁵

Shortly after the war ended, a revival was conducted at Bethlehem and Rev. Swaim asked Rev. A. C. Gibbs, the venerable pastor of the Leaksville Church, to come and conduct the services. During one of Rev. Gibbs' sermons that week a storm knocked out the power in the church and all was darkness. Rev. Gibbs continued his sermon as if nothing had happened and with the least amount of hesitation. 116

Rev. Swaim is especially remembered for attentively visiting his parishioners and he recalls many meals that he had in the homes of his members. In those days there were no such thing as fast food restaurants and so on Sundays the pastor and his family depended upon the kindness of others who would invite them home for dinner and supper. Rev. Swaim added many new members to the roll at Bethlehem during his six years there. As a result of his pastorate the Reidsville Circuit was far stronger than it was when he first arrived in 1943. In 1947, with the return of several men from the armed forces the Sunday School was restructured as follows:

BETHLEHEM METHODIST SUNDAY SCHOOL OFFICERS AND TEACHERS OCTOBER 1, 1947 TO OCTOBER 1, 1948

General Superintendent	Joe E. Meador Tom Williams
MEN'S BIBLE CLASS	
Teacher	William S. Baskerville
Assistant Teacher	T. A. Moore, Sr.
President	J. Luther Burton
Secretary-Treasurer	Ernest Jarrell
WOMEN'S BIBLE CLASS	
Teacher	Mrs. E. W. Pugh
Assistant Teacher	Mrs. J. Luther Burton
President	Mrs. Charles F. Burton
Secretary-Treasurer	Mrs. Ed C. Moore
YOUNG PEOPLE'S CLASS	
Teacher	Mrs. Frances S. Burton
Assistant Teacher	Mrs. Olivia M. Rich
President	Elwood Powell
Vice-President	Mrs. Anna W. Henley
Secretary	Nellie Walker
Treasurer	John Richard Jarrell
COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN	
Worship and Evangelism	Bettye Carter
World Friendship	Mary Ann Dallas
Community Service	John M. Burton
Recreation and Leisure	Virginia Moore
Adult Counselor	Mrs. Minnie D. Gammon
YOUNG ADULT CLASS	
Teacher	Ralph Williams
Assistant Teacher	Thomas A. Moore, Jr.
President	Lawerence Powell
Vice-President	Thomas A. Moore, Jr.

Bethlehem's Interval Years 1941 - 1963

Secretary	Edward W. Burton
Treasurer	Floyd Rich
Recreation Leader	Mrs. Floyd Rich
INTERMEDIATE CLASS	
Teacher	Mrs. Marie H. Powell
Assistant Teacher	Mrs. Anna W. Henley
President	John Dallas

PRIMARY CLASS

Teacher Mrs. Joe E. Meador Assistant Teacher Mrs. Mary W. Williams

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Rev. Claris Gordon Isley (1904 - 1954) followed Rev. Swaim in late 1949 and he continued the excellent progress on the circuit begun by his predecessor. Isley was a bachelor who was greatly aided in his work by his ever devoted Christian mother, Mrs. Hattie B. Isley. Isley either organized or revived youth groups in all five churches. He and Mrs. Isley reorganized the Sunday School at Wentworth and aided that church and Salem in the additions of educational buildings to the existing sanctuaries there. Meanwhile, the Mount Carmel and Lowe's Churches were absorbed in their own building programs which resulted in new and modern sanctuaries. At this time, Bethlehem was considering some changes to its sanctuary, such as adding more classrooms and adding a tower or steeple. For whatever reasons those plans never materialized. Yet the church continued to have its annual Brunswick Stews and other revenue producing projects that would, in time, be the means for future expansion. 118

Rev. Isley served the Reidsville Circuit for four successful years. Though he had many offers from large city churches, Isley remained what he said he wanted to be -"a country preacher by choice". No doubt Isley's most effective work was done while on the Reidsville Circuit. The pastor's salary in 1952 was the highest yet - \$3700.00. In 1953 the Bethlehem membership stood at 160. Isley was responsible for purging the church rolls of indifferent and non-supporting members who had been on the books for many years. Isley's dedication on the Reidsville Circuit overtaxed his health and he died

in February 1954, a few months after leaving the Reidsville Circuit. Rev. Isley was succeeded by Rev. Joseph Williams Lasley in September 1953. A native of Winston Salem and a graduate of Guilford College and Union Seminary, Rev. Lasley brought a certain amount of formality and dignity to his services and sermons which were very much appreciated. During the Lasley pastorate, which lasted three years, the new sanctuaries for Mount Carmel and Lowe's were dedicated and the educational wing additions to Wentworth and Salem were also dedicated. During these years the following was the preaching schedule for the Reidsville Circuit:

First Sundays	Salem	11:00 AM
Second Sundays	Wentworth	10:00 AM
	Bethlehem	11:00 AM
	Mount Carmel	3:00 PM
Third Sundays	Lowe's	11:00 AM
Fourth Sundays	Bethlehem	10:00 AM
	Mount Carmel	11:00 AM
	Wentworth	7:00 PM ¹²¹

Bethlehem held Sunday School at 10 AM on every Sunday of the month, except for the fourth Sunday and then at 11 AM.¹²² During the last year of Rev. Lasley's stay on the Reidsville Circuit, 1956, the circuit membership stood at 734:

Bethlehem	142	Lowe's	200
Mount Carmel	265	Salem	61
Wentworth	66		

At this time the Mount Carmel Church, which had been planning to go to station status, achieved their goal in September 1956. This left the Reidsville Circuit composed of Lowe's, Bethlehem, Salem and Wentworth. Rev. Lasley's interest in history was appreciated by

many on the circuit. During his pastorate, some improvements in the parsonage were made.

The last family to live in the old parsonage was that of Rev. James G. Allred who came to the circuit in 1956. The Allred family members were widely known for their singing capabilities. The first Sunday that Rev. Allred preached at Bethlehem Church his family sang for the service, selecting the popular hymn "I'd Rather Have Jesus." The congregations in all the churches were greatly blessed by the musical ministry of the Allreds. Rev. Allred was somewhat more of an evangelical type of minister which resulted in growth in every church on the circuit during his first year there.¹²⁴

During the Allred pastorate the desire to expand the facilities at Bethlehem increased. Gradual improvements to the building and the cemetery had been made over the last several years. The church was no longer heated by wood stoves, though they remained in the church long after their use. Gradually, the church began to raise funds for adding to the existing building.

During the pastorate of Rev. John J. P. Kincaid (1959 -1963) a more deliberate plan to increase the space at the present church was undertaken. A need for more classroom space was apparent as well as the need for a fellowship hall for meals and special programs. Moreover, a solution to the old parsonage was finally reached. Rather than to renovate the parsonage which was in decrepit condition, the circuit voted to sell the house. On July 22, 1960 the parsonage trustees:

James Carter W. R. Anderson Robert Stanfield G. D. Pearson David Gunn George Prook J. H. Perkins W. B. Walker

sold to Elwood King the old parsonage and lot on North Scales Street in Reidsville. The old house was soon demolished and on its site was erected a supermarket that is still used today. Meanwhile, the Lowe's Church was striving to go to station status and was in the process of building its own parsonage. 125

The proceeds from the sale of the old parsonage was divided amongst the four churches on the circuit. Wentworth, Salem, and Bethlehem each received \$1154.41 and Lowe's was paid \$1055.01. The total sale of the parsonage was \$4220.05 and the furniture in the house was sold for \$424.85. 126

Until Lowe's was able to go out on its own the circuit pastor was able to stay at that parsonage. So after a short stay at a rented home on South Scales Street in Reidsville, Rev. Kincaid moved into the Lowe's parsonage where he remained for the duration of his pastorate on the Reidsville Circuit. The circuit paid \$110.00 as monthly rent.¹²⁷

Meanwhile, Bethlehem was proceeding to build a new brick addition, to the frame sanctuary. The membership was canvassed for donations, plans were drawn and approved and the contract was awarded to the construction firm of S. E. Trogdon of Asheboro, North Carolina. The proposed brick and block structure was to be built on the east side of the church and connected to the rear of the existing structure. Passions within and outside of the community were aroused when it was learned that certain mature oak trees on the east side of the church would have to be removed in order to clear the site for the addition. Regretfully, the trees had to be cut down as no other suitable alternative could be found. 128

Construction began on the addition in 1963, and was carried over into the following year. The project, when completed, included six new classrooms, an office, a fellowship hall with kitchen and restrooms. The total cost of the addition was approximately \$34,000.00. The records of the building committee at that time are presumed lost. 129

The addition at Bethlehem Church caused somewhat of a hardship on the congregation for in 1963 it was announced that Lowe's church was going station at the end of that conference year and that the remaining churches on the circuit would have to acquire lodgings for the upcoming pastor and his family. This put the Bethlehem congrega-

tion in a bind, trying to finance an educational wing and a new parsonage at the same time.

A lot somewhat behind the Salem Church was donated to the trustees of the circuit in 1963, by R. Wilbur Stokes, Allen Y. Stokes and Alice M. Stokes. The new parsonage was constructed on this site and was completed by the beginning of the 1963 - 1964 conference year. A one story brick dwelling with a full basement, the new Reidsville Circuit Parsonage was a far cry from its dilapidated predecessor on North Scales Street. The parsonage was completed in time for the arrival of the family of Rev. Edmund Lynn who was appointed to pastor the newly realigned Reidsville Circuit at the 1963 Annual Conference. The Annual Conference that year granted station status to Lowe's Church and for the next twenty four years the Reidsville Circuit was composed of Bethlehem, Salem and Wentworth. 130

With a new educational building and fellowship hall completed, the Bethlehem Church pressed forward to pay off the indebtness on the addition. As the church pushed forward to attain that goal many in the congregation expressed desire to see the sanctuary remodelled. Other than normal maintenance, the church sanctuary had undergone little change since the renovation of 1940. While it would be several years before this project could be undertaken the desire was kept alive and continued to grow.

The women of the Bethlehem Church continued to be a major force within the congregation. Food sales and other such projects permitted the ladies to generate revenue in order to finance their worthy activities. The ladies were thus able to contribute generously to the church building fund which was of great interest to the society.

The Sunday School, too, was active during the 1960's and while growth there was not very significant over the years, the classes were a great stabilizing force within the congregation. The Vacation Bible Schools were still attended with great interest with usually three or four dozen children present for the sessions. The following are selected Sunday School statistics from 1965 - 1967:

The History of Bethlehem United Methodist Church

	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	
Total Enrollment	120	126	127	
Number of Classes	10	9	9	
Number of Children Enrolled (0-11 yrs.)	32	26	27	
Number of Youth's Enrolled (12-21 yrs.)	16	20	24	
Number of Adults Enrolled (22 and over)	57	65	61	
Total Officers, Teachers and Leaders	15	15	15	131

In 1962 the church reported 128 members with an average Sunday attendance of seventy at worship services. 132

The Rev. Lowell H. Swisher was appointed to the Reidsville Circuit in 1967 and very quickly became a popular and effective minister. Rev. Swisher's pastorate was quite successful and growth in all three churches was experienced. In early 1968 the circuit membership stood at 238. Early in his pastorate Rev. Swisher held a charge-wide meeting on stewardship and conducted a study course in church membership for young people. The new Methodist Hymnals were acquired by the three churches. A monthly newsletter was published for the circuit at this time also. Bulletins were now being furnished for every worship service. The worship schedule on Sunday was arranged so that each church could have services every Sunday morning. Services were held at 8:45, 10:00, and 11:15, and the schedule was rotated yearly so that three churches each would have services in the morning. ¹⁵³ In essence, the whole Reidsville Circuit was revived and strengthened as a result of Rev. Swisher's efforts. Harmony existed between the three churches and the circuit financial status was sound.

Methodist Men Organize

METHODIST MEN ORGANIZE

On February 8, 1968 the Methodist Men of the Reidsville Methodist Circuit was organized according to the rules of the Methodist Church.

"The purpose of this organization is to seek daily Christ's way of life; to bear witness to this way in business dealings and in social contacts; to engage in some definite christian service...to study and become familiar with the Methodist Church, its organization and its doctrines...It is intended to promote personal evangelism...to develop Christian fellowship in the church..."

Mr. Jesse M. Burton of Bethlehem was elected to serve as the first president of this circuit-wide organization.

The charter members of the Methodist Men included: 134

BETHLEHEM
Herman Haynes
John R. Jarrell
Jesse M. Burton
Ralph R. Williams
Charles F. Burton, Sr.
Charles F. Burton, Jr.
Joe E. Meador
Edward R. Anderson, Jr.
Ronald L. Hundley
J. L. Burton
Amos Burton
E. G. Jarrell
Robert B. Shreve
Lawrence Powell
Thomas A. Moore, Jr.
James Carter
Allen Burton

********* ********

SALEM
W. F. Angel, Jr.
Sammy Shelton
Harry Cain
O. T. Mundy
Odell Smith

WENTWORTH Elmer E. Boyd Samuel F. Scott Howard Boyd Floyd N. Rich

The group met monthly on the third Monday evenings for a fellowship meal and a program of interest. The ladies of the host church would prepare the meals for these monthly meetings.

The men's organization on the Reidsville Circuit has been an active one over the years, the majority of the group being composed of members from Salem and Bethlehem. The group participates in many worthy projects such as taking fruit baskets to shut-ins and residents of local nursing homes.¹³⁵

1968 was a landmark year in the life of the Methodist Church. In that year the Methodist Church in America merged with the Evangelical Brethren to form the United Methodist Church in the United States. The unification of 1968 aroused some opposition that was not evident during the 1939 merger that formed the Methodist Church. The 1968 union was gradually accepted and the changes in the local churches as a result of the merger were relatively minor.

The major change at Bethlehem at this time was the reorganization of the Women's Society of Christian Service in compliance with the dictates of the United Methodist Church. On October 17, 1968 the Bethlehem United Methodist Women was organized at the home of Mrs. E. C. Moore. The following were charter members:

Mrs. E. C. Moore
Mrs. E. G. Jarrell
Mrs. W. D. Gammon
Mrs. Thomas A. Moore, Jr.
Mrs. J. Weldon Gammon
Mrs. W. L. Williams
Mrs. C. F. Burton, Sr.
Mrs. John R. Jarrell
Mrs. C. F. Burton, Jr.
Mrs. Robert B. Shreve

The ladies, as always, continued to be active. Among their many projects was to make ditty bags to be sent to American Servicemen in Vietnam.

Rev. Charles L. Adams followed Rev. Swisher as pastor of the circuit in 1969. As were his two immediate predecessors, Adams was somewhat an evangelical type of minister who encouraged growth in

Methodist Men Organize

all three churches. During Adams' pastorate Bethlehem proceeded to liquidate the indebtedness on the 1963 addition. On January 11, 1970 the seven year old addition was dedicated by Bishop Earl G. Hunt of the Western North Carolina Conference at a special service. The entire project cost approximately \$34,000.00 and with that debt now a thing of the past the congregation could now concentrate upon securing the funds needed to renovate the nearly eighty year old sanctuary.¹³⁷

Rev. Edward L. Moore was appointed to the Reidsville Circuit in 1971, following the two year pastorate of Rev. Adams. A graduate of Davidson College, Duke, and Vanderbilt University, Moore was a hardworking pastor who encouraged more formality and businesslike attitudes in the three churches. During the one year pastorate of Rev. Moore, the Bethlehem Church was indeed most active. Fund raisings such as Brunswick Stews were held with the proceeds going to the building fund. In January 1972 the men of the church cleared off a lot on the west side of the church which was purchased from Dewey Soyars in January 1967. The lot was located between the church property and N C Highway 14. The present Highway 14 was constructed in 1959 and did come across the southwest corner of the church property. Under the leadership of Mr. & Mrs. Herman Haynes, Mr. & Mrs. Jesse Burton, Mr. & Mrs. John R. Jarrell and Mr. & Mrs. Thomas A. Moore, Jr. the Bethlehem Methodist Youth continued to be an active group, engaging in such activities as preparing fruit baskets for the shut-ins at Christmas. 138

In December 1971 the church established the Nell Moore Gammon Organ Fund to honor that dedicated individual whose musical relationship with the Bethlehem Church began in 1912. The idea of an organ fund was originated by Mrs. Leola Meador, mainly, and others who were members of the Young Adult Sunday School Class (now the T. L. Knight Class). Mrs. Meador's efforts were greatly assisted by the president of that class Mr. Frank Shreve. The original purpose of this fund was to finance the purchase of a suitable organ for the church, and the fund was a perpetual one in

nature. Subsequent action by the church board changed the fund from an organ to a music fund. In so doing the fund could not only finance an organ but other music related materials for the church such as choir robes and the piano now used in the present sanctuary. For a decade this fund gradually grew until the first organ at Bethlehem in sixty years could be purchased. The music fund continues to be an integral part of the total mission of the Bethlehem Church.¹³⁹

In May 1972 a special Youth Sunday service was observed at the Wentworth Church in which the young people of the church participated. The co-ordinator of this event was George Allen Burton, of the Bethlehem Church, a ministerial candidate who, following his graduation from Duke Divinity School, became an active member of the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. He is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Amos Burton and the grandson of Mr. & Mrs. Allen Burton, all active members of the Bethlehem Church. 140

The first known ministerial candidate to come out of the Bethlehem Church was John Matthew Burton, the son of Mr. & Mrs. C. F. Burton, Sr., who following his graduation from High Point College in 1955 was admitted into the Western North Carolina Conference. He has served in numerous charges throughout the conference and served three years with distinction as a missionary in the Yuma Indian Reservation in Arizona. The Burton family has been very active in the church affairs at Bethlehem. Charles F. Burton, Jr. has served as church treasurer for over twenty five years. ¹⁴¹

Rev. William Edward Harris was appointed to the Reidsville Circuit in 1972. A native of Iredell County, Rev. Harris made many friends during his one year pastorate on the Reidsville Circuit. The building fund at Bethlehem continued to increase during this time and the entire church congregation anticipated the eventual remodeling of the sanctuary.¹⁴²

THE RENOVATION OF 1976 - 1977

By the time Rev. Guy Henry Godfrey came to the circuit in 1973 the Bethlehem building project was becoming a source of great interest not only to the congregation but to the community and circuit as well. Rev. Godfrey, a graduate of Western Carolina University, was a good mixer with his parishioners and adapted well into a circuit far removed from his native mountains. The preaching schedule for the circuit continued to be a burden for the minister who still preached three times every Sunday morning. At times the circuit was fortunate to procure the services of a Duke divinity student, for the summer, who was able to lighten the preaching load for the pastor. For several weeks during his pastorate Rev. Godfrey was away at school and during that time the pulpits of the circuit were filled by two dedicated brothers who were Methodist ministers and natives of the Mount Carmel Church community. Rev. Lindsey Strader, a respected minister of the Western North Carolina Conference, and his brother Rev. Silas Strader, a local minister, blessed the three churches with their sincerity and sound preaching, which continues to be remembered and cherished by many. 143

The Bethlehem Church was now in the position to proceed with the remodeling of the 1892 sanctuary. The church secured the services of Bill Glover of Greensboro, architect, whose plans were amended and approved by the church conference on March 10, 1976. A church building committee was formed and composed of:

Jesse Burton*
Mrs. Mildred Shreve*
Ronald Hundley
T. L. Knight

Mrs. Frederick Gammon Miss Ruth Walker John R. Jarrell Ralph Williams

* Co-Chairmen

The contract for the actual construction work was awarded to Rockingham Reality Company, Inc., the executive vice president of which was Ralph Williams who directed the construction work. The completed sanctuary is a monument to the untiring efforts of Mr. Williams, a member of Bethlehem since 1935.¹⁴⁴

The plans called for the gutting of the old sanctuary while retaining basically the exterior walls and roofline. The exterior walls were to be brick veneered with new windows and doors. The front porch added in 1940 would be demolished and the front, or south, wall of the sanctuary would be extended about ten feet to accommodate the addition of a vestibule, which was very much in need. An impressive steeple would crown the completed sanctuary, as well as a new front portico. As for the interior, even more remodeling was needed. An elaborate single set of front doors replaced the two sets of double doors. There would be two rows of pews in the sanctuary with a single aisle, instead of the three rows of pews and two aisles. The ceiling which was lowered in 1940 would be returned to its original position in height, as it was in 1892. A bride's room and coat closet were added in the space allotted for the vestibule. The entire chancel area would be redone, including the placing of the choir loft to the west side of the chancel, a new birch and fir lectern to the east side of the chancel and a beautiful and contemporary communion table and rail between the lectern and the choir loft. The Sunday School rooms added in 1940 were remodeled and handicapped restrooms were installed in one of the rooms on the rear end of the sanctuary. Beautiful light fixtures, new windows and a carpet now graced the sanctuary. The carpet was a special project of the ladies of the church. The sanctuary acquired a new piano at this time. 145

The result of this latest renovation was a practically new sanctuary to complement the educational wing and fellowship hall. Construction began in April 1976 and continued through the duration of the year. The total cost of the renovation was \$94,446.38. Toward this amount the Duke Endowment contributed a total amount of

\$12,150.00, divided into two separate payments in 1976 and 1980. The Duke Endowment had made two previous grants to Bethlehem Church: in 1940 (\$300.00) and in 1967 (\$7000.00) for building purposes. 146

The generosity of the members and friends of Bethlehem was responsible for the realization of this fond dream.

Special appreciation was extended to Mr. Ralph Williams who directed the project. He made a set of offering plates from pine wood from the old church, the dentil mould around the top of the sanctuary interior walls, and the cross that hangs in the sanctuary.¹⁴⁷

The first service in the new sanctuary was held on May 22, 1977, with the outgoing pastor Rev. Guy Godfrey presiding. During the renovation the congregation held services in the fellowship hall. The official open house was held on Homecoming Sunday, July 10, 1977. This was truly a great day of rejoicing in the life of the Bethlehem Church. Rev. J. Curtis Swaim, who served as pastor from 1943 to 1949, delivered the sermon for this service. The cornerstone for the completed sanctuary was donated by Mr. T. P. Shinn of Eden, a prominent member of the Leaksville Methodist Church. The cornerstone was laid at a special service on April 23, 1978 with Bishop L. Scott Allen, of the Western North Carolina Conference, officiating at the afternoon service. 148

While the sanctuary was being remodelled, the Bethlehem choir was increasing in size and activity. In 1979 Mrs. Joyce Vaughn became the choir director at Bethlehem, succeeding Mrs. James McArn who had served since 1977. Rev. James McArn served as pastor of Reidsville Circuit from 1977 - 1979.

In 1979 the Rev. Parker Holmes Hager was appointed to the Reidsville Circuit. A native of Yancey County and a graduate of High Point College, Rev. Hager was the son of a Methodist minister and was named for the noted minister of the conference Rev. Parker Holmes. Rev. Hager brought respectability and stability to the Reidsville Circuit and very quickly became popular with his parishioners, both young and old alike. Mrs. Hager was just as

popular as her husband and accompanied her husband to all three churches every Sunday morning. She participated in the Bethlehem Choir and was very active in the reviving of the choir at Salem, in addition to taking an active part in the United Methodist Women. In recalling his successful six year pastorate on the Reidsville Circuit Rev. Hager wrote:

As we look back over the years, Reidsville Circuit was one of our favorite appointments...more of the members took responsibility rather than {leaving it for the pastor} to do. There was a comradeship of members and ministers for the many occasions where food was prepared and enjoyed. 150

During the first few years of Rev. Hager's pastorate, the Beth-lehem pastorate began to liquidate the debt on the new sanctuary and their efforts were crowned with divine success. On July 12, 1981, Homecoming Sunday, the sanctuary of the Bethlehem United Methodist church was formally dedicated. Bishop L. Scott Allen delivered the dedicatory sermon and participated in the exercise, assisted by Rev. Hager and the Northeast District Superintendent, Rev. D. P. Smotherman.¹⁵¹

At the time of the dedication in 1981, the fund for the new organ stood at \$2,521.55. Plans were made to push this project forward to completion. On April 4, 1982 the church board voted to proceed with the purchase of a two manual Rodgers electric organ, complete with a set of chimes, at the cost of \$9,500.00. Ralph Williams designed and constructed sound chambers for the organ. The organ was acquired and demonstrated at a special recital on Homecoming Sunday, July 11, 1982. Miss Mary Jo Meador, the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Frank Meador, became the first organist at Bethlehem Church in sixty years. Miss Meador had long been active in the musical aspects of the church, where her talents at the keyboard were recognized at an early age. As organist, she has proven to be a dependable asset to the morning worship services and though college kept her at some distance from home she would return to

The Sesquicentennial of 1985

play on Sundays. Of such is the dedication of a true church musician. 152

The Bicentennial of American Methodism in 1984 was observed by the Bethlehem Church in a series of appropriate services held on the second, third, and fourth Sundays in June 1984. These Sunday morning programs stressed the heritage of American Methodism and its great musical aspects. Many members of the congregation participated in these exercises. On November 21, 1984 the church presented the play "I REMEMBER THE CHRISTMAS CONFERENCE" which reenacted the December 1784 meeting that created the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, held in the city of Baltimore. 153

THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF 1985

A landmark occasion in the long life of Bethlehem Church occurred on July 14, 1985 when the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the congregation was observed. Plans for this special event had long been in progress for in August 1983 the church administrative board appointed a committee to begin the groundwork for the celebration. Mrs. Joe E. Meador, Thomas A. Moore, Jr., and Jesse Burton were appointed to serve on this committee which in turn recommend the formation of an expanded sesquicentennial committee. This committee was composed of:

Jesse Burton - Chairman Thomas Moore Joyce Vaughn Leola Meador Virginia Gammon Helen Moore Mary Meador T. L. Knight Bob McWaters Ruth Walker John R. Jarrell A number of subcommittees were formed to handle all aspects of the celebration. Mrs. Joe Meador, Mrs. Ralph Williams and Mr. Thomas Moore, Jr., Church Historians, prepared a booklet briefly covering the churches history, complete with pictures of various activities of the congregation.¹⁵⁴

The anniversary service, held in conjunction with the annual home-coming, was observed on July 14, 1985 and was a complete success as approximately 350 people converged upon the Bethlehem Church. Many of the attendants were clad in costumes of yesteryear and examples of early modes of transportation were also on display. Displays of memorabilia related to the church and its families were enjoyed in the fellowship hall. Also on display were festive banners made by the United Methodist Women and Methodist Youth. Copies of the church history booklet were given as mementos to each family in attendance. Also on display was the new oak and glass showcase in the vestibule made by Ralph Williams in which was placed an old flagon and chalices which were probably the first ever used at Bethlehem to celebrate Holy Eucharist (Communion). The set was returned to the church by a member whose family had it in possession. 155

Bishop L. Bevel Jones, III, of the Western North Carolina Conference, delivered the address for the morning worship service. An afternoon program presented by the Revs. George and John Burton, natives of the Bethlehem Church, completed the days activities.

Just prior to the celebration at Bethlehem a pastoral change was

Just prior to the celebration at Bethlehem a pastoral change was made for the Reidsville Circuit, in fact it would be the last for the circuit as it then existed. Rev. Norris Ashley Randall, Jr. was appointed in June 1985 and served the charge for two years.¹⁵⁷

When Rev. Randall came to the Reidsville Circuit, he came under the impression that he would pastor a two point charge. However, the Conference officials did not permit a realignment of the Reidsville Circuit in 1985. As early as September 1984 the Bethlehem board was exploring the possibilities of going to station status or at the very least going to a two point charge. It was agreed that a three point charge was too unwieldy for any one minister to pastor efficiently. Bethlehem and Salem churches needed more pastoral attention while the Wentworth Church, by 1987, was bordering on the brink of extinction, was desperately in need of pastoral attention in order to prevent its closing. As early as 1984 it seemed obvious that if any circuit realignment was possible that Wentworth would be the church taken off the circuit. No other alternative seemed possible, despite the fact that considerable opposition to this change existed in both the Salem and Wentworth churches. As of March 1985 Bethlehem's membership stood at 117, Salem's at 78 and Wentworth at 39.¹⁵⁸

After much deliberation and discussion the Reidsville Circuit in a special charge conference in the spring of 1987 voted to abide by a division of the charge as proposed by the Conference, whereby the Wentworth Church would be taken off the circuit and allowing Bethlehem and Salem to remain together as a two point charge. Bethlehem would then purchase Wentworth's share of the parsonage and assume its apportionments paid to the charge, district, and conference. Bethlehem accepted this charge on the condition that Wentworth Church not be closed and be allowed to remain open. In June 1987 the circuit parsonage was appraised at \$70,000.00. Accordingly, the Bethlehem Church agreed to purchase Wentworth's share, amounting to 13%, at the price of \$9100.00. Wentworth accepted the plan on the condition that Bethlehem also purchase its share of the parsonage contents. Bethlehem then made a flat offer to Wentworth of \$9500.00, and after much consideration the Wentworth Church accepted the offer. 159

As of July 1, 1987 the Reidsville Circuit was formally abolished. Wentworth was paired off with the Meadow View Church in Eden, while the other two churches formed the Bethlehem-Salem Circuit. (Unfortunately a request of the Wentworth Church to hold a service marking the end of this pleasant union was not accepted.) For most concerned the circuit realignment occurred very peacefully. Charles F. Burton, Jr., and Mrs. Lawrence J. Gunn, treasurers of the

Bethlehem and Wentworth churches respectively, represented the two churches in the financial transactions. 160

While the impending circuit realignment occupied much of Rev. Randall's pastorate, some accomplishments were made at Bethlehem. In October 1986 Rev. Randall announced that the pastorate would issue a pictorial directory with the pictures of the churches and its respective families. The directories were delivered in the spring of 1987. In February Mrs. Randall organized a circle of young women which would be under the auspices of the United Methodist Women. The group of ladies that up to that time made up the Methodist Women became another circle, one of older adults. Together the two circles meet a few times each year and together make up the United Methodist Women. The Randalls also organized a new young adult class at the church. ¹⁶¹

In May 1987 the church board voted to proceed with construction of a brick shelter and building wired with lights and with running water. This building would be used when the church sponsored Brunswick Stews and other similar activities as well as serving as a place of storage for various equipment. The building was constructed on the east side of the fellowship hall-only yards away from the first Bethlehem Church site. ¹⁶²

In June 1987 Rev. Larry G. Jent was appointed to the Bethlehem - Salem Circuit. In the first year of his pastorate, all programs of the church have improved and grown. The need for service to the entire community has been stressed. In November 1987 the first issue of the church newsletter was published. A successful revival at the church was held in May 1988. In the summer of 1988 an experimental early morning worship was begun. The 8:00 AM service was geared for those who for whatever reasons were unable to attend a 10:00 or 11:15 AM service. Bethlehem and Salem yearly rotate the worship schedule with services at ten and eleven-fifteen o'clock. 163

NELL MOORE GAMMON DAY

1987 marked an important milestone in the history of Bethlehem Church and in the life of one of its most dedicated members. On August 30, 1987 a special joint worship service was held to observe the seventy-fifth anniversary of Mrs. Nell Moore Gammon's dedication to the church as substitute organist, organist, and since 1925, pianist. Mrs. Gammon's record is one without peer. Beginning as substitute organist for her uncle Frank Moore, who gave her her first music lessons, Nell Gammon's life has been dedicated to home, family and the church. By practicing four hours each day at the piano, she was able early in life to render such service to the church that over the years became indispensable.

For years upon years Bethlehem Church was without a choir director, and Mrs. Gammon took on the responsibility of directing the choir, forming duets, trios and quartets, not even mentioning the countless special holiday programs which she supervised. Words are inadequate to express the dedication, sincerity and dignity of this servant of God. Long may she continue to serve the Bethlehem Church by thought, word and deed!

Nell Moore Gammon Day was another of successful and meaningful services held at the Bethlehem Church. In addition to special music by the church choir, the Rev J. G. Allred family who served the church some thirty years ago rendered a special selection. A ceremony with a "This is Your Life" format, hosted by Mrs. Joe Meador, based upon the life of Mrs. Gammon was included as part of the worship service. Congratulations and greetings were extended to Mrs. Gammon from all over the state and nation, including a letter from President Ronald Reagan. Mrs. Gammon's legacy to Bethlehem Church and her family is indeed very dear and precious a long life filled with unselfish acts to her God and to her church. 164

BETHLEHEM CHURCH TODAY AND TOMORROW

Today the Bethlehem Church is a progressive and active congregation. While growth within the church is slow and oftentimes barely sufficient to maintain a stable number of members, Bethlehem by far is in much better condition than most rural circuit churches. The current year (1988) has been a successful one in the life of the church. All functions of the church are in sound condition. For many years under the leadership of Mr. & Mrs. John R. Jarrell, the United Methodist Youth was an important part of the church. In numerous ways the youth has performed many duties of the church which will no doubt promote successful stewardship by these young people in the future. At present, there are nine Sunday School Classes at Bethlehem, all of which are active and fruitful.

The classes are as of 1988:

(Senior) Ladies' Class T. L. Knight Class Young People's Class Shining Lights Class Nursery Fellowship Class Young Adult's Class Intermediates Primary Class

Today, the Bethlehem Church is making great effort toward increasing its membership and attendance. Special meetings, suppers and services have been geared toward that end. On September 18, 1988 a "Friends' Day" was observed with a morning and afternoon service and a mid-day meal. Such programs show real potential of stimulating growth which is sorely needed. Bethlehem's concern toward those less fortunate in the community has likewise increased and activities related to that matter have been conducted with success. Both the ladies' and men's groups in the church, while small, are beginning to show real growth and interest as well as enthusiasm.

Bethlehem Church Today and Tomorrow

Yet, in spite of these encouraging prospects Bethlehem faces many of the problems that face all rural churches. For many years the church has wanted to be granted station status in the same matter as was Mount Carmel and Lowe's before it. Despite the sound financial status of the church at present, the real influential factor in the granting of such status to Bethlehem is membership strength. Bethlehem's net growth in membership over the last several years has been negligible.

According to the present dictates of the Conference, it would seem unlikely that Bethlehem could amass enough new members in the next few years to convince Conference that station status is merited. While that in itself is important, the fact that Bethlehem is as strong a congregation as ever is even more important. Few rural churches in this present age are able to maintain a stable membership, adequate facilities, and a sound budget and financial status. Yet, Bethlehem has excelled in all these things. And how is that possible? The logical reason behind this achievement is that Bethlehem Church is a family, pure and simple. Both young and old are able to cooperate and function together -a feat envied by larger churches with segmented congregations.

If the youth of the church are the growing branches of a tree, that tree being the church, then the trunk and roots of that tree are the older mature members of the church. In todays modernistic society, the older members of the church universal are being shunned and put to pasture. Such attitudes are fatal to any church. Bethlehem's strength has always derived from its older and wiser members with the energetic support of the young people.

It is indeed sad that Bethlehem Church, the guardian of a wonderful and sacred history, knows so very little of its heritage. As the older families die out or move away, a newer breed of church members will naturally not have the same appreciation for the church and its long heritage. As new members join Bethlehem, they should be made to feel a vital part of the church and its heritage, which is an ongoing process. The sacred past is the rudder to guide

the ship of God into the uncertain future. Those indifferent to the history of the church are condemned to an aimless and uncertain existence.

Indeed, Bethlehem has a blessed and bountiful heritage. From those early pioneer days when settlers from Virginia arrived in the Town Creek area to the age when man can extend his influence across and beyond the world itself, Bethlehem Church has maintained its position as a true beacon of salvation and security in the lives of many. May the true peace that resides within the bounds of the church today be likewise accessible to all those who wish to follow the holy path of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

BETHLEHEM PEOPLE, PLACES AND THINGS

When a church history is written the researcher often comes across stories about the church that sometimes bridges the fine line between history and tradition. Whatever the case these stories are worthy of preservation for future generations. Also, it is seldom that many of the notables in the church's history can be studied in appropriate length in the main body of the history. For all these reasons and more this chapter is added in order to preserve the heritage which rightfully belongs to Bethlehem Church.

One of Bethlehem's most colorful members was Mr. James H. Thomas, (died 1940) who moved to the Bethlehem community about 1887 and joined the church there in 1890. Mr. Thomas was a veteran of the Confederate Army, serving as a private in the North Carolina 27th Infantry Regiment. Thomas was with the army at Appomattox when General Lee surrendered in April 1865. For many years he enjoyed recalling his time spent with the army. Thomas was the last surviving Confederate Veteran in Rockingham County and in 1938 at the age of 92, he journeyed to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania to attend the last reunion of the Blue and Gray. Upon returning from the reunion he told a friend that he was glad that he attended the program at Gettysburg for it finally proved to him that "some Yankees were real Christian gentlemen" 165

Mr. Thomas occupied a chair in the Bethlehem Church near the pulpit, due to his being hard of hearing. The chair was positioned just inside the chancel rail and many recall Mr. Thomas sitting in his chair in a somewhat leaning position with his hand up to his ear. Mr. J. R. Moore also had a chair alongside Mr. Thomas for the same reason. Together they presented a picture that is cherished by many in the church today. The chairs that Mr. Thomas and Mr. Moore used in the church were sold some years ago at a church sale. 166

As with any old church, ghost stories are not uncommon to the

Bethlehem Church. One such story involved Mr. W. Sam Somers, the son of Mr. & Mrs. Wesley Somers who lived hardly a mile west of the church. Mr. Somers recalled a story which he swore was true that took place about October 1900. One night, Somers was returning from a taffy pulling party at a nearby home when he approached the Bethlehem Church from the east. Remembering that he had left his hat in the church the previous Sunday, Somers decided that he would stop and pick up his hat and then proceed home. As he pulled his horse into the church driveway, Somers looked up to his amazement and saw "a headless horseman dressed in a white robe and riding a white horse." Somers noticed that the horseman dismounted and entered the Bethlehem Church. After considerable debate as to whether or not to go into the church and retrieve his hat, Somers decided to do just that. He opened the door and made a quick dash for his hat in one of the rear pews and departed the scene with all due haste.167

Another story involved one of the county's most distinguished citizen who was asked to fill in one Sunday for the Bethlehem pastor who was ill. Since the gentleman did not drive a car (automobiles were quite rare in those days) he engaged the services of a local youth, whose family owned a suitable vehicle, to carry him over to the Bethlehem Church. On the trip over to the church, the car experienced a blowout on one of its tires. Realizing that he was running late, the gentleman stood up in the car and let fly some of the most unusual expressions and oaths that were ever heard in the Bethlehem Community. After the youth had changed the flat tire, the gentleman composed himself and completed the journey over to Bethlehem where he gave one of his excellent sermons, for which he was noted.¹⁶⁸

Another colorful couple in the Bethlehem Church was Mr. & Mrs. Ellis W. Pugh who lived on "Mountain View," their farm a couple of miles south of Bethlehem Church. Mr. Pugh, a widower from Randolph County, met Miss Florence Moore, the daughter of Mr. John R. Moore, and married her while both were approaching the

sunset years of their lives. Both taught Sunday School at Bethlehem and were active in many ways in the community. Mr. Pugh was well remembered for his dry sense of humor and his questionable quality of driving a vehicle. When asked by the Bethlehem minister to offer a prayer at one service, Mr. Pugh replied, "pray yourself. That's what we're paying you for." Mr. Pugh was affectionately known as "Mr. Shug", which was the derivative of his wife's nickname for him - "sugar". Mrs. Pugh for over twenty years was the Bethlehem community correspondent for the *Leaksville News*, and nearly every week she submitted the latest happenings in the area. In October 1940 Mrs. Pugh included in her weekly column a section entitled "Seen & Heard", which told of the "less newsworthy goings on" in the community. Among her "Seen & Heard" items were the following:

Mrs. T. M. Moore wearing a new fall hat...Otis Powell chatting with the ladies...Charles Burton running a brand new tractor... Sara Anderson making herself a new school dress...Gladiola Thacker selling chances on a car...Frederick Gammon singing "I'll Never Smile Again" while he measured corn land...Olivia Moore running to the mailbox in order to get her letter in before the postman leaves...Martha Thacker soliciting votes in the "Tobacco Queen Contest" and getting them... Weldon Gammon wearing a pair of dead white canvas shoes and a white straw hat on a cold frosty morning last week...Lillie Mae Talley wearing a bright red corduroy that was very becoming to her type of beauty... 169

And so on ad infinitum.

During the pastorate of Rev. W. F. Womble (1891 -1895), the pastor and his family resided in Wentworth. Rev. Womble's elder son, Bunyan, recalled an incident (over sixty years later) that is quite amusing to relate here in his own words:

I attended a prayer meeting (at the Wentworth Presbyterian Church) one Wednesday evening with my mother. Mr. Lawson Withers conducted the prayer service. He convinced me by reference to several passages in the Bible that it was just about time for the world to come to an end. This was about 1893 or 1894. On Saturday afternoon following Wednesday night, I was in the back yard gathering some stove wood when I heard a bugle. I stopped and listened and the bugle continued to sound, I looked into the sky and fully expected to see Gabriel; but since he was nowhere to be seen, I finally realized that it was old Nick's bugle. Nick was a colored driver who worked at Whittemore's Livery Stable (in Wentworth). It was the custom in those days for the salesmen, drummers as they were called, to hire a hack at Whittemore's livery stable and travel around through the county for several days, selling their wares. Nick carried a bugle with him, and it was his custom when he returned from one of these trips, as he approached the village, to begin to blow his bugle and continue blowing until he came into the stable. Needless to say, I was very much relieved when I realized that the sounds were coming from ole Nick's bugle and not from Gabriel's. 170

Bunyan Womble later became on of the foremost attorneys in North Carolina, but he never forgot his relatives and heritage in Rockingham County.

Mrs. E. W. Pugh's weekly Bethlehem news column in the <u>Leaksville</u> <u>News</u> often carried more than just church news - in fact newsbreaking events were announced and the following two items are examples of such newsworthy events:

April 20, 1933 - Chicken thieves carried of f fourteen fat hens and one rooster from Mr. & Mrs. W. D. Gammon's last Friday night. Petty larceny of this kind is becoming too frequent in this section.

October 17, 1940 - Mrs. Ida Moore, who lives in the Ratilffe home heard a commotion in the poultry yard last Tuesday morning between 12 and one o'clock. Upon investigating with a flashlight Mrs. Moore found a huge 'possum in a chicken coop. She grabbed a big stick and with a well aimed blow killed the unwelcome intruder.

These are just a few of the stories associated with Bethlehem Church and its people. The vast majority of the tales and traditions related to the church were taken to the grave along with many of the saints of old. In some cases perhaps that is just as well.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS AT BETHLEHEM

While this is a history of Bethlehem Church, per se, the public schools that were operating in the vicinity of the church are worthy of mention and play a role in the history of the church.

Prior to the 1840's little if anything is known about the schools in Rockingham County. In 1839 the North Carolina General Assembly enacted legislation that called for the teaching of the basic rudiments of English education to the white boys and girls. Rockingham County, as were the other counties, was divided into school districts. The county's first public school was opened on January 20, 1840, but the whereabouts of this first school remains to this day unknown. Elections were held for school committeemen for each district. The responsibilities for these committeemen were varied but focused upon acquiring sites for schools and to see that the schools did in fact operate. The Bethlehem Community was Rockingham County School District #12 when the county was first laid out into school districts. One of the most important historical records for Rockingham County is the minute book for the county common school committee from 1841 - 1876. This book provides details relative to district boundaries, committees, teachers, pupil censuses and other data not found anywhere else. With this record we are somewhat

more knowledgeable of the school activities in the Bethlehem area prior to the Civil War. Yet, even this record is very far from complete and most of the history of the Bethlehem School will likely never be known.¹⁷¹

By June 17, 1841 the committeemen for school district number 12 at Bethlehem were approved by the county committee. The Bethlehem Committee was composed of: Francis B. Moore, Alex Wesson, and Lloyd Waters. All of these names are familiar ones in the Bethlehem community. School committees were appointed on a yearly basis and while the records are not always complete a fairly complete listing of school committeemen for Bethlehem district can be prepared. It is as follows:

1842 - Francis B. Moore, Alex. Wesson, Lloyd Waters

1843 - Lloyd Waters, George Wells, F. B. Moore

1844 - F. B. Moore, Lloyd Waters, John F. Moore

1845 - Pendelton Ratliffe, James M. Moore, Richard P. Corum

1847 - J. G. Robertson, Pendelton Ratliffe, ___Mitchell

1848 - John Miller, John F. Moore, Richard Corum

1850 - F. B. Moore, John Moore, Richard Corum

1852 - John G. Roberston, J. M. Moore, F. B. Moore

1853 - J. A. Ratliffe, James M. Moore, John Smith

1855 - John A. Ratliffe, John Smith, John Miller

1856 - F. B. Moore, James M. Moore, John A. Ratliffe

1857 - James Mitchell, James M. Moore, John A. Ratliffe

1858 - James Mitchell, J. A. Ratliffe, R. S. Boswell

1860 - James M. Moore, William Kemp, John T. Ellington

1861 - John Ratliffe, A. L. Robertson, Chalmers Glenn

1862 - John A. Ratliffe, A. L. Robertson, F. B. Moore 172

Nothing is known about the school buildings at Bethlehem prior to the Civil War. We can only assume that one of two possibilities existed; that the school was held in a log cabin on private property (possibly the church lot) or that school was held in the church sanctuary itself. No records have been located to substantiate either possibility. The pupil censuses of the Antebellum years list some

Public Schools at Bethlehem

eighty students living in the Bethlehem district in the 1840's and 1850's. A partial listing of the teachers at Bethlehem School is available from existing records:

1841 - G. W. Hubbard	1842 - E. G. Browning
1843 - George H. Holderby E. G. Browning	1844 - E. G. Browning
1845 - C. Wall J. A. Ratliffe	1853 - Joseph S. Waters
1855 - Joseph S. Waters	1856 - Richard P. Jones
1859 - Miss Lizzie Ratliffe Joseph Waters	1861 - R. P. Jones 173

The actual state of the school at Bethlehem during and immediately following the Civil War remains unknown, although it seems likely that it was continued in some form. A more complete and accurate record of the county public school system begins with the Rockingham County Board of Education minute books which start in 1877. Apparently Bethlehem district #12 remained intact after the war. The following school committees were appointed from 1877 - 1884 on a two year basis:

- 1877 William B. Moore, E. F. Anderson, John Wilson (reappointed 1879)
- 1881 Robert Moir, John R. Moore, J. D. Glenn, J. E. Richardson
- 1883 W. M. Settle, Robert Moir, John R. Moore

Since the records at this time clearly states "the schoolhouse at Bethlehem" it is quite sure that a school building aside from the church existed. By the 1880's a log school building directly behind the present Bethlehem Church was being used and among the teachers who taught there was Richard T. P. Jones (1820 - 1900),

one of the pioneers of public education in the county, a graduate of UNC, and a leader in the Wentworth Church. Jones' grandson, J. Elwood Carroll, would distinguish himself as a prominent member of the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. Also among the teachers there was John J. McCargo (1841 - 1917) a native of Charlotte County, Virginia and a war veteran. While at Bethlehem, McCargo met and married one of his pupils, Lucy Ratliff, the daughter of John A. and Eliza Ratliff(e) who were prominent members in the Bethlehem Church. Descendants of John J. McCargo have played important roles in county education and continue to do so. Other teachers at Bethlehem include Lizzie Mitchell, Annie S. White, and R. N. Howard. The length of school terms differed each time and seldom would a teacher's salary be more than \$100.00, and most of the time was much less! 175

The most interesting chapter of the history of Bethlehem School is basically a mystery for the Board of Education records from 1884 - 1909 have been missing for at least fifty years. This especially tragic for Bethlehem for it leaves many questions unanswered. What is known is that by 1891 the Bethlehem School committee was offered the old Bethlehem Church sanctuary for use as a school building. By this time some school district realignment had taken place and the Bethlehem community was district #17. On March 14,1892 the trustees of Bethlehem Church met with the school committee for district #17 and the following resolution was passed:

The (church) trustees then made call of the old church building with fifty one poles of land, more or less...The site on which the said church (building) stands, courses and distances to be given in the deed of conveyance, for and in the consideration of the sum of two hundred dollars to the committee of said district: George H. Moore, T. A. Mitchell, and John S. Wilson to be paid out of the school fund; to be used as school property only. 176

It is interesting to note that two of the three members of the school committee were members of the Bethlehem Church.

The deed which resulted from the March 17 meeting was quite different from what was originally specified. It would have seemed logical for the church to deed to the school committee the original lot purchased from Lloyd Waters in 1835 along with the 1835 church building. The original lot was composed of 156 square pole (2574 square feet). Why would the church at the March 1892 meeting vote to sell the old church plus fifty square poles of land when the actual deed that finalized the transaction called for 160 square poles sold? The deed, dated July 11, 1892, is worth noting for various reasons:

Tract of land adj. the lands of the John A. Ratliffe, estate and George H. Moore. "Beginning at a pine due north 8 poles, thence west 20 poles, thence south 8 poles to a rock, thence east 20 poles to the beginning, this being the land on which the old church at Bethlehem now stands...the church shall be used as a public schoolhouse..." 177

While the quantity of land in the above deed is nearly equal to that of the first church deed in 1835, the dimensions of the two lots are grossly different. Therefore, it seems likely on the basis of the available evidence that the church had "title" to property that was not recorded by deed.

Two additional deeds that were also recorded on July 11, 1892 only makes any understanding of the matter less likely. One deed is from the public school committee #17 to James J. Ratliffe and called for a lot "adjoining the lands of the Estate of John A. Ratliffe, Dec'd.,Geo. H. Moore and others...the parcel of land is the Public School House lot with the old house of Bethlehem Church in School Dist. No.17..." Does this deed refer to the old Bethlehem School building that was replaced by the former sanctuary, the old school building no longer needed or does the deed refer to the old sanctuary which the school committee had just purchased from the church? To make things considerably more complicated another deed, also dated July 11, 1892, from James J. Ratliffe to George H.

Moore calls for land adjacent the J. A. Ratliffe Estate. This lot was bounded on the east by the property of George H. Moore and Bethlehem Church, on the north by George H, Moore, on the west by J. A. Ratliffe, and on the south by the public road from Reidsville to Leaksville. This two acre lot was "...the public school house lot with the old house on it at Bethlehem in Dist. No. 17..." The deed descriptions cited here are so vague that one is unable to positively state the proper chain of events regarding the sale of the old Bethlehem Church, the disposal of the old school house, and the adaptation of the old church for use as the school house.

What is indeed known is that the old Bethlehem Church, built in 1835, was purchased by the school committee and was used as a school house until about 1905 - 1906. One of the few surviving pupils who attended Bethlehem School, when it was in the old church building, is Mrs. James D. Carter (nee Willie Jarrell). 179

On January 28, 1903 the Bethlehem County Board of Education sold to the Bethlehem Church for seven dollars, a lot...

adjoining the lands of the Bethlehem Church lot and G. H. Moore. It being part of the school house lot, Dist. No. 5 in Wentworth Township and the west end of said lot, and bounded as follows... Beginning at a stake in the line of the Bethlehem Church lot and running north with the school house lot 2.00 chains to the line of G. H. Moore; thence west with said Moore's line to his corner 2 50/100 chains to a stone; thence south with said G. H. Moore's line 2.00 chains to his corner; thence east with the line of said church lot 2 50/100 chains to the beginning, containing one half acre more or less... 180

The descriptions of this said deed do not bear any resemblance to the lot that the church sold to the school committee in 1892, on which stood the old sanctuary. This 1903 deed would appear to show that the school board was merely returning to the church some excess property that was not needed by the school. The 1903 deed clearly shows that the old church, now school, was not transferred

back to the church at that time. At some point within the next few years a new school building was built on the west side of the church property and while the Bethlehem congregation did reacquire the site of the 1835 sanctuary no deed citing this transaction was ever recorded. This lack of accurate and precise deeds and the complete absence of others point out that the Bethlehem Church does not have a complete and accurate title to the property that it now claims. Steps to correct this discrepancy are presently being taken (1988).

Just exactly when the use of the old church for a school house was discontinued is not known though it must have been by late 1906. On September 13, 1907 Mr. & Mrs. George H, Moore sold to the Rockingham County Board of Education (G. W. Martin, Robert H. Ivie and J. Y. Stokes) a three acre lot on the west side of the Bethlehem Church lot. On this site was constructed a frame school building with one room. This building was already on the site before the Moores sold the lot to the school board. The <u>Reidsville</u> <u>Review</u> of November 2, 1906 reported that...

The new school (at Bethlehem) is now complete and ready for the painter to put on the finishing touches. It will be one of the best school buildings in the county.

Meanwhile, the school at Mt. Carmel was nearing completion as well. 182

The new school at Bethlehem was quite typical of rural school-houses in the early 20th century. Originally a one room structure, the schoolhouse was heated by a woodstove. The building had a fireplace, which was extremely rare in school buildings of that day and age, as most schools had only chimneys especially made for stoves only. The existence of a fireplace is most unusual and cannot be explained. Upon entering the schoolhouse, one found a cloakroom on the right and a small "library" on the left side. Gradually, even this building became too inadequate and a second room was

added to the west side of the existing structure. While the gabled end of the 1906 school building faced the highway, the gabled end of the addition faced the west, toward the J. J. Ratliffe Home (now Dewey Soyars'). Exactly when this addition was constructed is not known. However, in April 1913, Mr. J. R. Moore presented a request to the Rockingham County Board of Education calling for an addition to be made to the one room school. While the Board of Education record books do not state what action was taken regarding Moore's request, it must be assumed that the board acted affirmatively in this matter and the second room was then added. 184

While the gabled end of the new addition faced west, the entrance to that room faced the highway. A front porch, in line with the front wall of the original building extended across the front of the new addition except for the extreme west and where a small cloakroom was added. The new room was able to be entered from the outside as well as from within the old school room. A row of movable blackboards separated the two classrooms. In the new classroom a stage, of small size, extended across the west wall. The stage was in line with new cloakroom, and so the latter could then be used as a dressing room when school plays were presented.¹⁸⁵

While a complete listing of those who served as teachers at Bethlehem School does not exist among those who taught there included:

Elizabeth Moore Pattie Gibbs Gertude DeShazo Clara Hudson Minnie Duncan Eloise Mobley Blanche Thompson Olivia Goode

Miss Goode also served as principal at the school. All of these teachers served sometime between the years 1906 -1924. 186

A favorite of many Bethlehem School students was Miss Nannie Ratliffe, a sister of Mr. J. J. Ratliffe, who was well versed in music and played for the services at the Bethlehem Church. Most every Friday afternoons Miss Ratliffe would come by the school and see

if the teachers would allow the students to go over with her to the church. If the students had done their assigned work then the teachers would let them go with 'Miss Nannie' over to the church where she would sing and play the organ and allow the students to accompany her. This was a great source of entertainment to the children who were much easier to entertain and content than their counterparts are today.¹⁸⁷

To the east of the schoolhouse, towards the church, was a huge woodpile which kept the woodstove well filled in the winter. The school had no well but used a spring that was located north of the schoolhouse and down a hill. Many children would eat their lunches on the woodpile. The school even had assigned students who could do the pencil trimming for the other students. Among those who had that privilege were Ed Moore and Ernest Jarrell. Of course many pranks were typical in all schoolhouses, Bethlehem was no exception. 188

Mr. Francis Anderson, of Greensboro, who attended Bethlehem School in the early years of his youth, still has in his possession a small textbook which he used while in the first grade at Bethlehem. The title of the book is: The Carnflex Primer: A duplicate of the Practical Sightword Reading Chart and Phonic Exercise.

Under the guidance of the County Superintendent of Public Instruction, Prof. L. N. Hickerson, a plan for the consolidation of many of the county's rural schools was instituted in the 1920's. Prior to the closing of the Bethlehem School, which went only to the eight grade, many older students were transferring to the high schools at Wentworth and Reidsville. In April 1922 the county school board approved the establishment of a modern consolidated school at Wentworth that would replace all other schools in the township. The school board seemed to allow Mount Hermon and possibly the Harrison Crossroads schools to remain open in some reduced manner until the end of the 1924 - 1925 schoolyear. On October 5, 1925 the school board ordered that Mount Hermon, Bethlehem, and Harrison's Crossroads schools be sold and disposed at a public sale. The bids on Bethlehem and

Mount Hermon buildings were to begin at \$225.00 and \$200.00 respectively. On February 18, 1926 J. J. Ratliffe formally purchased the Bethlehem School and property for \$785.00. The old Bethlehem School Building still stands today as a reminder of man's achievement in education though now obsolete. 189

Only the original 1906 schoolhouse section remains standing today.

The later addition was demolished a number of years ago.

* 1906 schoolhouse demolished 7/13/1992

ENDNOTES

- Larry E. Tise, A House Not Made With Hands: Love's Methodist Church 1791 1966. (Walkertown, N. C.), (Piedmont Press, 1966), p. vii.
- ² General Knowledge. Elmer T. Clark, *Methodism in Western North Carolina*, (Nashville, Parthenon Press, 1966), pp. 13-14.
- ³ Michael Perdue, "The History of Wentworth United Methodist Church 1836 -1986", The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy, June 1986, p. 1.
 - ⁴ Ibid, p. 2
- ⁵ Frances R. Brown, "A History of Salem United Methodist Church 1799 1986", The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy, December 1986, pp. 59 -60. (Publication hereinafter cited as "J.R.C.H.G.")
 - ⁶ Ibid, p. 60.
 - ⁷ Perdue, p. 2
 - 8 Brown, p. 62
- ⁹ Reidsville Review, April 21, 1988 (Centennial Issue); Perdue,Wentworth Church pp. 2-3
- Jean Anderson, "Carmel Church Records, Rockingham County,
 N. C." North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal, February 1983, pp.
 14 22. See also same publication August 1983, p. 173. The evidence

presented here is the basis for the rebuttal for the claims of the Mount Carmel Church regarding its organization date. The Carmel Church has yet to formally acknowledge the existence of the Carmel Class Papers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which would place considerable doubt on their claims.

- 11 Rockingham County Deed Book, P, p. 113. County Register of Deeds Office Wentworth, N. C.
- 12 Michael Perdue, The History of the Leaksville United Methodist Church 1837 1987. Unpublished typescript in possession of the church, Eden, N. C., Also see Guilford Circuit Quarterly Conference Minute Book 1832 1865, located in the manuscript department of Duke University Library; Perdue, Wentworth Church p. 5 and Leaksville News, August 1935.
 - 13 Rockingham County Deed Book, 2F, p. 424.
- ¹⁴ Kate Irving Thomas Papers, located in the Special Collections Room, Rockingham Community College Library, Wentworth, NC. Mrs. Thomas was a descendent of Trainum Tyler and was one of the area's leading researchers of Rockingham County families,. Information supplied by Mr. Francis Irving Anderson of Greensboro, N. C., and Brown, p. 63.
 - 15 Leaksville News, August 22, 1935
 - 16 Rockingham County Deed Book, 2I, p. 77.
 - 17 Guilford Circuit Quarterly Conference Minute Book 1832 1865.
- ¹⁸ Brown, p. 93. The listing of ministers was compiled by Michael Perdue.

- 19 Brown, pp. 62 63
- ²⁰ Perdue, Wentworth Church pp. 6 7.
- ²¹ Address made by Rev. R. F. Bumpas published in *Historical Papers of the North Carolina Conference and the Western North Carolina Conference Historical Society 1925*, p. 169. A copy of this publication is in the Duke University Divinity School Library.
 - ²² Perdue, Wentworth Church p. 7 and Brown, p. 64.
 - ²³ Perdue, Wentworth Church p. 10
 - ²⁴ Raleigh Christian Advocate, January 20, 1860.
- ²⁵ Letter dated November 5, 1863 from Rev. C. M. Pepper to his father, in possession of Mrs. Ellen Pepper Tilley, Danbury, N. C.
- ²⁶ Raleigh Christian Advocate, August 19, 1868; Webster's Weekly (Reidsville) June 21, 1894; and Perdue, Wentworth Church pp. 7, 13.
 - 27 Raleigh Christian Advocate, October 15, 1873.
- ²⁸ Francis I. Anderson, Anderson & Irving of Rockingham County North Carolina, Cox & Bryan of Onslow County, North Carolina and Related Families, (Avera Press, Wendell, N. C.), p. 71.
 - 29 Reidsville News, November 27. 1875.
- The diary of Rev. Bumpas has been preserved in the Southern Historical Collection of the University of north Carolina Library at Chapel Hill, N. C. Used with permission. The entire diary of Bumpas' stay in the county has been reprinted in the *J.R.C.H.G.*, June 1988.

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- 31 Perdue, Wentworth Church p. 14
- ³² Perdue, Wentworth Church p. 17. The original copy of these church records is in the possession of Mr. Charles F. Burton, Jr. in 1988.
 - 33 Ibid.
 - 34 Ibid.
 - 35 Perdue, Wentworth Church p. 19
 - ³⁶ Conversation with Mr. Francis I. Anderson, July 1988.
 - ³⁷ Conversation with Mrs. Ruth Ellington Siler, August 1988.
- ³⁸ Conversation with Mrs. Margaret Hancock Kerley, Wentworth, N. C., August 1983.
 - ³⁹ Bethlehem Church Conference Record Book, See Note 32.
 - 40 Reidsville Times, December 23, 1887.
 - 41 Perdue, Wentworth Church p. 20.
- 42 Quarterly Conference Minute Book of the Leaksville Circuit (1891) and the Wentworth Circuit (1891 1895), book in possession of Mr. Jesse M. Burton, Eden, N. C. in 1988.
 - 43 Ibid.
 - 44 Ibid.

- 45 Ibid. Rockingham County Deed Book, 91, p. 547.
- 46 Reidsville Review, June 10, 1892.
- 47 Rockingham County Deed Book, 91, p. 547.
- ⁴⁸ See note 42.
- 49 See note 41.
- ⁵⁰ See note 42.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 Reidsville Review, October 16, 1895.
- ⁵³ Reidsville Review, November 29, 1895.
- 54 Miscellaneous records of the Wentworth Church in possession of Michael Perdue, Wentworth, N. C. *Reidsville Review*, July 10, 1896.
 - 55 Tise, p.65; Webster's Weekly, September 6, 1900.
 - 56 Rockingham County Deed Book 132, p. 124.
- 57 Rev. E. J. Poe was the first minister to live in the parsonage, but not through his entire pastorate.
- 58 Conversation with Rev. Silas Strader, Eden, N. C. August 1988.
 - 59 Reidsville Review, April 27, 1902.

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- 60 Reidsville Review, April 27, 1902.
- 61 Reidsville Review, October 27, 1905.
- 62 Reidsville Review, May 17, 1907.
- 63 See note 58.
- 64 See note 58.
- 65 Bethlehem Church Membership Roll Book in the possession of Mr. Jesse Burton.
 - 66 Leaksville News, October 20, 1932.
- 67 Conversation with Mrs. Nell Anderson Moore Gammon, August 1988.
- 68 The 1971 1972 Annual Report for the Reidsville United Methodist Circuit, ed. by Rev. Edward L. Moore. A brief history of the Bethlehem Church is in this publication. Copies of this report are in the possession of several people including Mr. Jesse Burton and Michael Perdue.
- 69 "Memoir" 1937 Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; pp. 163 164.
- ⁷⁰ The Sunday School Minute Book in 1988 is in the hands of Mrs. Charles F. Burton, Jr.
- 71 Conversation with Mrs. Olivia Moore Rich, Wentworth, N.C., July 1988. Mrs. Rich is a niece of Frank Moore.
 - 72 "Abstracts of the Minutes of the Wentworth and Reidsville

Circuits' Quarterly Conference 1921 - 1939", compiled by Mrs. Bettie Sue Gardner of Reidsville. A copy of this abstract is on file in the special collections Room of Rockingham Community College Library. The original minutes were presumed destroyed in the early 1960's. Hereinafter cited as "Quarterly Abstracts".

- 73 Ollie Smith, "History of the Mount Carmel Church", 1952,
 p. 4. Unpublished typescript, a copy of which is in R. C. C. Special Collections Room.
 - ⁷⁴ See note 65.
 - 75 1927 Journal of the W.N.C.C., pp. 138 140.
 - 76 Letter from Rev. Paul Townsend of Newland, N. C. to Michael Perdue, September 1988.
 - 77 1934 Journal of the W.N.C.C., p. 154.
 - 78 "Quarterly Abstracts"
 - 79 Ibid.
- Letter from Miss Doree Goode, Summerfield, N. C., to Michael Perdue, August 1988. Conversation with Mrs. Olivia Goode Heafner of Winston Salem, N. C. September 1988. Miss Goode and Mrs. Heafner are daughters of Rev. and Mrs. Goode.
 - 81 "Quarterly Abstracts"
 - 82 1940 Journal of the W.N.C.C., p. 110.
 - 83 Leaksville News, October 21, 1927.

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- 84 These records are in the hands of Mr. Charles F. Burton, Jr. as of 1988.
 - 85 Ibid
- ⁸⁶ Conversation with Nancy Somers Walton of Reidsville, August 1988. Mrs. Walton as a child and teenager lived next door to the Reidsville parsonage.
 - 87 Reidsville Review, clipping in writer's possession, undated.
- ⁸⁸ "Autobiography of Rev. T. V. Crouse" unpublished typescript in possession of Rev. Crouse's daughter, Mrs. D. Fred Mitchell, Reidsville, N. C.
- ⁸⁹ This has been the general feeling of members in all five of the circuit churches.
 - ⁹⁰ Leaksville News, February 21, 1935, November 28, 1935
 - 91 Leaksville News, August 11, 1932.
 - 92 Leaksville News, March 2, 1933; December 12, 1935
- 93 Papers in the possession of Mr. Jesse M. Burton, Eden N. C..
 - 94 Ibid. Leaksville News, September 15, 1938.
- 95 The Beacon, November 1939 (Monthly newsletter of the Rockingham County Union Methodist Young People), copy in possession of Jesse Burton.
 - 96 Leaksville News, September 14, 1933.

- ⁹⁷ Leaksville News, October 20, 1932; November 14, 1935.
- 98 Conversation with Mrs. Mary Jarrell Meador, July 1988.
- 99 Leaksville News, August 15, 1935.
- 100 Leaksville News, August 22, 1935.
- 101 Program for the Centennial Celebration in possession of Mr. Jesse Burton.
 - 102 Leaksville News, September 26, 1940.
 - 103 Conversation with Mrs. Mary Jarrell Meador, July 1988.
 - 104 Leaksville News, July 18, 1935.
 - 105 North Carolina Christian Advocate, May 2, 1940.
 - 106 "Quarterly Abstracts"
 - 107 Conversation with Mrs. Olivia Moore Rich, July 1988.
- 108 Leaksville News, January 18, February 15, 22, March 22, April 4, 11, 18 and May 2, 9, 1940.
 - 109 Leaksville News, May 2, 9, 1940.
 - 110 North Carolina Christian Advocate, May 2, 1940.
 - Leaksville News, July 3, 1941.

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- 112 Journal of the W. N. C. C., 1984, p. 364.
- 113 Leaksville News, October 2, 1940; October 8, 1942.
- 114 Conversation with Rev. Swaim, July 1988. Rev. Swaim now lives in Salisbury, N. C.
 - 115 Ibid
 - 116 Ibid
 - 117 Records in the possession of Mr. Jesse M. Burton
 - 118 Perdue, pp. 26 27
 - 119 Ibid
 - 120 Rev. Lasley, now retired, lives at Lake Junaluska, N. C..
 - 121 Reidsville Review, January 7, 1954.
 - 122 Ibid
- 123 Rev. Lasley in conversation in September 1988 recalled that while they lived at the Reidsville parsonage they received country eggs from the Thomas A. Moore, Jr. farm. Mrs. Moore, a teacher in Reidsville, would "deliver" the eggs to the parsonage once a week on her way to work.
 - 124 Conversation with Mr. Frederick Gammon, August 1988.
 - 125 Rockingham County Deed Book, 554, p. 698.

- 126 Information provided by Mrs. Thomas A. Moore, Jr. Charge Treasurer since 1949.
- 127 Miscellaneous records of the Reidsville Circuit on file in the office of the parsonage.
 - 128 Reidsville Review, April 21, 1988 and General Knowledge.
 - 129 Ibid
- Rockingham County Deed Book 598, p. 696., Information provided by Mrs. Thomas A. Moore, Jr. .
- Reports from Bethlehem Church, in possession of Mrs. Thomas Moore, Jr. in 1988.
 - 132 Ibid
- 133 Pastor's report to the Quarterly Conference of the Reidsville Methodist Circuit. March 1968. In possession of Mr. Jesse M. Burton.
- 134 Undated clippings from the *Reidsville Review*, in possession of Mr. Jesse M. Burton.
 - 135 General Knowledge
- 136 Minute Books of the society for these years, in possession of the secretary at that time Mrs. Nell Moore Gammon.
 - 137 Reidsville Review, April 21, 1988.
 - 138 The 1971 1972 Annual Report for the Reidsville United

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Methodist Circuit. See note 68.

- 139 Ibid and conversation with Mrs. Frank Meador, August 1988.
 - 140 See note 138.
 - ¹⁴¹ General Knowledge.
 - 142 Ibid.
 - 143 Knowledge of the writer.
- 144 Papers of the Building Committee in possession of Mr. Jesse Burton who served as treasurer for the project.
 - 145 Personal knowledge of the writer., Ibid.
 - 146 See note 144.
- 147 Conversation with Mr. & Mrs. Ralph R. Williams, August 1988.
- 148 Program for the July 10, 1977 service in possession of the writer.
 - 149 See note 145.
- 150 Ibid. Letter from Rev. P. H. Hager to Michael Perdue, August 1988. Rev. Hager, now retired, lives in Mooresville, N. C. .
- 151 Program bulletin for the service is in possession of the writer.

- 152 Personal knowledge of the writer., various minutes of the Bethlehem Church Administrative Board in possession of the Recording Secretary, Miss Ruth Walker.
 - 153 Bulletins in possession of Mr. Jesse Burton.
- 154 Various papers in the possession of Mr. Jesse Burton., Personal knowledge.
 - 155 Personal Knowledge.
 - 156 Ibid.
 - 157 Ibid.
- 158 Compilation of minutes of the Bethlehem Administrative Board Meetings 1984 1985.
 - 159 Ibid., Personal knowledge.
 - 160 Ibid.
- Conversation with Mrs. Thomas Moore, Jr, August 1988.
- As of the summer of 1988 the building is nearing completion.
 - 163 Conversation with Mrs. Thomas Moore, Jr, August 1988.
- Conversation with Mrs, Mary J. Meador, August 1987 and August 1988.

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- 165 Conversation with Mr. Francis Anderson, Greensboro, N. C., August 1988.
 - 166 Conversation with Mrs, Mary J. Meador, August 1988.
- 167 Conversation with Mrs, Nancy Somers Walton, Reidsville, N. C., August 1988. Mrs. Walton is the youngest daughter of W. Sam Somers.
- 168 Conversation with Mrs. Ruth Ellington Siler, Eden, N. C., July 1978.
 - 169 Leaksville News, October 4, 1940.
- 170 Letter from Bunyan S. Womble to Miss Nancy Lawson Withers of Wentworth, N. C., March 11, 1960. Letter in Possession of Michael Perdue.
- 171 The minute book is preserved in the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, N. C. .
 - 172 Rockingham County Public School Committee Minute Book.
 - 173 Ibid.
- 174 Minutes of the Rockingham County Board of Education 1877 1884, on file at the County Educational Building, Wentworth, N. C. .
- 175 Ibid. Conversation with Mrs. Lucy McCargo Rankin, Reidsville, N. C., August 1988. Mrs. Rankin is the granddaughter of J. J. McCargo. Conversation with Mrs. Mary Jarrell Meador, July 1988.

- 176 Minute Book of the Wentworth Circuit Quarterly Conference 1891 1895. In possession of Mr. Jesse M. Burton.
 - 178 Rockingham County Deed Book 91, p. 547.
 - 179 Rockingham County Deed Book 91, p. 547, 545.
 - 180 Mrs. Carter now resides in Orlando, Florida.
 - 181 Rockingham County Deed Book 146. p. 200.
 - 182 Rockingham County Deed Book 151. p. 478.
 - 183 Reidsville Review, November 2, 1906.
 - 184 Conversation with Mrs Mary J. Meador, August 1988.
- 185 Ibid. Minute Books of the Rockingham County Board of Education, on file at the County Educational Administration Building, Wentworth, N. C. .
 - 186 See note 13.
- 187 See note 13., Conversation with Mrs. Mary Wilson Darlington, Winston-Salem, N. C., September 1988. Mrs. Darlington attended the Bethlehem School as a child.
 - ¹⁸⁸ See note 17.
 - 189 See note 16.
 - 190 See note 14.

CONFERENCES, DISTRICTS, and CIRCUITS RELATIVE TO BETHLEHEM CHURCH 1835 - 1988

CONFERENCES

1835	-	1838 -	Virginia Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church
1838	-	1890 -	North Carolina Conference, Methodist Episcopal
			Church, after the split of the Methodist Episcopal
			Church in 1845 the conference was in the
			Methodist Episcopal Church, South.
1890	-	Present -	Western North Carolina Conference, Methodist
			Episcopal Church, South; from 1939 the Methodist
			Church, from 1968 to the present the United
			Methodist Church.

DISTRICTS

1833	-	103/	Sansbury District
1837	-	1850	Danville District
1850	-	1890	Greensboro District
1890	-	1891	Winston District
1891	-	1968	Greensboro District
1968	-	1974	Winston Northeast District
1975	-	Present	Northeast District

CIRCUITS

1835	- 1837	Guilford Circuit
1837	- 1850	Rockingham Circuit
1850	- 1881	Wentworth Circuit
1881	- 1890	Ruffin Circuit
1890	- 1891	Leaksville Circuit
1891	- 1932	Wentworth Circuit
1932	- 1987	Reidsville Circuit
1987	- Present	Bethlehem - Salem Circuit

MINISTERS OF BETHLEHEM CHURCH 1835 - 1881

1835	J. Leigh, T. M. Sharp
1836	David B. Nicholson
1838	William Anderson
1839	G. Brown
1840(Jan)	William W. Turner
1840(Dec)	William Warren Albea
1841	William Albea, John Rich
1842	John Rich
1843	James D. Lumsden
1844	William Closs
1845	Philmer W. Archer, Thomas S. Cassodey
1846	Jeremiah Johnson (William Anderson, supply for
	1847)
1848	William Anderson
1849	Numa Fletcher Reid
1851	David W. Doub (William Anderson, supply for
1853	Joshua Bethel (William Anderson, supply for 1854)
1855	Issac Watts Advent
1856	Benjamin M. Williams
1857	Alfred Norman
1859	David R. Bruton
1861	Clarendon Martin Pepper
1863	William Calvin Gannon
1864	Marcus C. Thomas
1866	William C. Gannon
1867	Robert Graham Barrett
1868	John W. Lewis
1872	William Capers Norman
1875	Robah Fidus Bumpas
1876	VanBuren A. Sharpe (and W. S. Hales for 1880)
1880	Peter L. Herman
1881	Nereus Coltrane

MINISTERS OF BETHLEHEM CHURCH 1885-1988

1885	Robert Graham Barrett
1886	George F. Round (John H. Anderson, from
	Oct.Dec.1887)
1887	Robert Preston Troy
1890	Joseph Carson Thomas
1891	William F. Womble
1895	John McCollum Price
1899	Edward Jasper Poe
1900	W. Legette
1901	Albert Sidney Raper
1905	Seymour Taylor
1908	Alexander L. Aycock
1912	A. J. Burrus
1914	Thomas C. Jordan
1916	Franklin L. Townsend
1919	Charles F. Sherrill
1921	Charles Plato Goode
1925	John Thomas Ratledge
1928	W. Reid Harris
1930	Thomas V. Crouse
1941	Byron Shankle
1943	J. Curtis Swaim
1949	Claris G. Isley
1953	Joseph W. Lasley
1956	James G. Allred
1959	John P. Kincaid
1963	Edmund R. Lynn
1967	Lowell Swisher
1969	Charles L. Adams
1971	Edward L. Moore
1972	William Harris
1973	Guy H. Godfrey
1977	James McArn
1979	Parker Holmes Hager
1985	Norris A. Randall, Jr.

Larry G. Jent

1987

DUKE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SERVING AS ASSISTANT PASTORS for the REIDSVILLE CIRCUIT 1960 - 1978

YEAR APPOINTED AND SERVED	NAME OF ASSISTANT
1960	. Delos Corderman
1961	. Ken Alexander
1962	. William Ruth
1969	. Michael Potts
1972	. Bobby Sharp
1973	. Daniel Powell
1974	. Charles Turner, Jr.
1977	. Robert Carrouth
1977	. David Byrum
1978	. Thomas Mercer

Compiled by Mrs. Thomas A. Moore, Jr. Reidsville Circuit Treasurer

MEMBERSHIP ROLL of the BETHLEHEM CHURCH 1884

Note-This is the earliest membership roster for the Bethlehem Church dating from September 20, 1884, when it was revised at the church conference. A photostat copy of the original roll is in hands of Mr. Jesse Burton of Bethlehem Church. The original record is in the hands of Mr. C. F. Burton, Jr. as of 1988.

Anderson, Edward N. Anderson, Sarah J. Alcorn, William Alcorn, Samuel E. Corum, Pinkney J. Corum, Sally E. Dallas, William W. Dallas, Sarah D. Dixon, Jacob Dixon, Sarah A. Ellington, Elizabeth Ellington, Sarah M. Ellington, Louisa Ellington, James K. Ellington, James M. Ellington, Malissa T. Houchins, Lillian Jerral (Jarrell?), Louisa Jones, Levinia Jones, Mary Lillard, Nancy Lindsey, Catherine McCargo, Lucy Meador, Mary Moore, Mary J. Moore, Richard T. Moore, Mickey E. Moore, William B. Moore Lucy J.

Moir. Robert A. Moir, Sally E. Moir, Robert A., Jr. Moir, Lena T. Moir, Samuel W. Mobley, Annie E. Ratliff, Mary E. Ratliff, Bettie H. Richardson, Lizzie P. Saunders, William R. Saunders, Elizabeth Saunders, Sally E. Suthard, Charles Thomas, Lucy Wilson, John S. Williams, Virginia Walker, Levinia Wall, Sally Settle, Jane Roach, Minerva Bennett, John P. Ratliffe, Nannie Burton Nannie J.

MEMBERS ADDED IN 1885

Moore, John R.
Moore, Ellen E.
Moore, Barnett P.
Moore, Mary E.
Moore, George H.
Moore, Eugenia C.
Moore, J. Wesley
Moore, William Francis

Moir, J. W. Ratliff, Minnie K. Ratliff, James J. Suthard, Elizabeth Mitchell, Lizzie J. Anderson, Emma M.

BETHLEHEM CHURCH MEMBERSHIP ROLL 1886

(with additions and removals between April 1886 October 1887)

W. B. Moore Lucy J. Moore Mary J. Moore R. F. Moore Mica E. Moore J. R. Moore Ellen E. Moore George H. Moore Eugenia C. Moore C. Wesley Moore Bettie H. Ratliffe Mary E. Ratliffe Lucy McCargo Ed. N. Anderson Sarah J. Anderson Virginia Williams Elizabeth Ellington Sarah M. Ellington Lousia Ellington James K. Ellington Nancy Lillard Catherine Lindsey Jane Settle Leticia Carter Elizabeth Saunders

Sally E. Saunders

Charles Suthard
Samuel E. Alcorn
John P. Bennett
Lillian E. Houchins
Nannie Ratliff
Minnie K. Ratliff
James J. Ratliff
Elizabeth Suthard
Lizzie P. Mitchell
Emma M. Anderson
James W. Moir
J. C. Griffitth
Mary E. Meador
Sally Wall

REMOVALS

Mary E. Jones April 1886
B. P. Moore . . November 1886
M. E. Moore . . November 1886
Mica E. Moore November 1886
Elizabeth SuthardNovember 1886
Pinkney J. Corum June 25, 1887
Louisa Jarrell . September 17, 1887
(All of the above other than W.

Frank Moore	Pinkney Corum, who died, trans				
Minerva Roach	ferred to other churches.)				
Levinia Walker	,				
John S. Wilson					
Louisa Jarrell					
William Alcorn	***********				
Sally D. Dallas					
Lizzie P. Richardson	ADDITIONS				
Nannie J. Burton					
W. W. Dallas	William F. Burton June 13, 1886				
R. P. Moore	John Luther Burton June 13, 1886				
Mary E. Moore	Jesse Crawford Burton . June 13, 1886				
R. A. Moir, Sr.	Maggy Meador June 13, 1886				
Sally E. Moir	James Wilson 1886				
R. A. Moir, Jr.	James P. Ellington 1886				
Lena T. Moir	Taylor Corum 1886				
Malissa Ellington	J. F. Moore 1886				
Annie E. Mobley	Clay Wilson 1886				
Samuel W. Moir	Sidney Wilson 1886				
Pinkney Corum	Thomas Anderson Moore 1886				
Sarah E. Corum	Adda A. Moore 1886				
Jacob Dixon	Lizzie Williams 1886				
Sally Dixon	Fletcher Moir 1886				
James M. Ellington	Adar Corum 1886				
	Molly V. Anderson 1886				

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS FOR BETHLEHEM CHURCH

(INCOMPLETE)

1880 - ?	Rev. John Henry Anderson
1884 - 1894	John R. Moore
1894 - 1895	W. F. Moore
1895 - 1903	Unknown
1903 - ?	Samuel P. Thomas
1904 - 1913	Unknown
1913 - 1915	John J. Thomas
1915 - 1919	Thomas A. Moore, Sr.
1919 - 1921	John T. Moore
1921 - 1922	A. R. Williams
1922 - 1924	J. I. Anderson
1924 - 1935	Thomas A. Moore, Sr.
1935 - 1937	Ralph R. Williams
1937 - 1941	Thomas A. Moore, Jr.
1941 - 1942	Claude Mobley
	Jesse Burton
1942 - ?	Claude Mobley
1947 - 1948	Jesse Burton
1959 - 1962	Frederick Gammon
1962 - 1967	Thomas A. Moore, Jr.
1967 - ?	T. L. Knight
	Ronald Hundley
1977 - 1983	Jesse Burton
1983 - 1986	T. L. Knight
1986 - 1987	
1987 - present	
•	

The listing of Superintendents is incomplete due to the absence of records. It is likely that some of the above men served longer in this office than the fragmentary records indicate.

OFFICERS OF THE BETHLEHEM CHURCH

Stewards Appointed in September 1915

John R. Moore
James H. Thomas
J. J. Ratliffe
T. A. Moore
J. I. Anderson
J. Luther Burton
J. Oscar Thomas

Wentworth Circuit Stewards from Bethlehem Appointed 1921

J. R. Moore
Thomas A. Moore
Frank L. Anderson
John M. Burton
J. F. Moore
T. Meador Moore
J. I. Anderson
J. J. Ratliffe
A. R. Williams

Wentworth Circuit Trustees from Bethlehem Appointed 1921

J. R. Moore George H. Moore John M. Burton John J. Thomas S. W. Moir

J. I. Anderson

J. H. Thomas

J. F. Moore

J. T. Moore

W. R. Anderson

Frank Burton

Wentworth Circuit Stewards from Bethlehem Appointed 1930

J. M. Burton

Ed C. Moore

T. Meador Moore

J. S. Dallas

F. J. Meador

J. J. Ratliffe

Ellis W. Pugh

J. N. Moore

James H. Thomas

Thomas A. Moore

Wentworth Circuit Stewards from Bethlehem Appointed 1930

J. I. Anderson

J. F. Moore

George H. Moore

J. J. Ratliffe

J. H. Thomas

Frank Burton

W. I. Anderson

Ellis W. Pugh

J. J. Thomas

Trustees of the Bethlehem Church 1933-1934

E. W. Pugh
W. I. Anderson
John M. Burton
George H. Moore
J. F. Moore
J. J. Ratliffe

Bethlehem Trustees 1937-1938

Members of the Quarterly Conference of the Reidsville Circuit for the Conference year 1962 - 1963 from Bethlehem

Thomas Moore
J. T. Gillespie
R. B. Shreve
F. E. Williams
Mrs. W. D. Gammon
Joe E. Meador
Mrs. Margaret Walker

Lawrence Powell
J. R. Jarrell
E. G. Jarrell
Meador Moore
Mrs. G. A. Walker
Mrs. T. A. Moore, Jr.
Ralph Williams

T. L. Knight
Frederick Gammon
Mrs. C. F. Burton
Mrs. Joe E. Meador
C. F. Burton, Jr.

Charles Burton Mrs. Lawrence Powell Mrs. J. Weldon Gammon William R. Anderson

Presidents of the Bethlehem Methodist Women

1909 - 1914	Miss Maude Moore
1914 - 1926	Names unknown other than Mrs. Thomas
	Moore, Jr. who served prior to 1919, the
	year she died.
1926 - 1927	Mrs. J. I. Anderson
1927 - 1929	Mrs. Charles F. Burton, Sr.
1929 - 1930	Mrs. E. C. Moore
1930 - 193	Mrs. J. Luther Burton
1933 - 1934	Mrs. W. D. Gammon
1934 - 1936	Miss Lottie Burton
1936 - 1943	Mrs. Charles F. Burton, Sr.
1943 - 1944	Mrs. Ellis W. Pugh
1944 - 1947	Mrs. Joseph E. Meador
1947 - 1950	Mrs. W. D. Gammon
1959 - 1960	Mrs. Thomas Moore, Jr.
1960 - 1961	Mrs. C. F. Burton, Jr.
1961 - 1965	Mrs. Thomas Moore, Jr.
1965 - 1967	Mrs. C. F. Burton, Jr.
1967 - 1972	Mrs. Thomas Moore, Jr.
1972 - 1974	Mrs. C. F. Burton, Jr.
1974 - 1975	Mrs. John R. Jarrell
1975 - 1980	Mrs. Thomas Moore, Jr.
1980 - 1981	Mrs. John R. Jarrell
1981 - 1988	Mrs. Thomas Moore, Jr.
1989	Mrs. C. F. Burton, Jr.

Membership Roll of the Bethlehem Women's Missionary Society 1926

(Earliest known roll in existance)

President - Mrs. J. I. Anderson Vice Agent - Mrs. Nat Anderson Vice President - Mrs. J. L. Burton Treasurer - Miss Lottie Burton Recording Secretary - Mrs. C. F. Burton Corresponding Secretary - Mrs. E. W. Pugh

Mrs. A. C. Burton
Mrs. A. H. Dallas
Mrs. Nannie Dallas
Mrs. J. F. Delancey
Mrs. J. W. Gammon
Mrs. Frank Meador
Mrs. J. E. Meador
Mrs. S. W. Moir
Mrs. S. W. Moir
Mrs. J. N. Moore
Miss Nannie Ratliffe
Mrs. A. R. Williams

Honorary Membership

Mr. J. M. Burton
Mr. S. W. Moir
Mr. E. W. Pugh
Mr. J. H. Thomas

Mr. C. F. Burton
Mr. T. A. Moore
Rev. J. T. Ratledge

KNOWN BETHLEHEM COMMUNITY VETERANS

WORLD WAR I

Arthur Burton
Hubert Barnes
Henry Dallas
Russell Dallas
Sam Ellington
Turner Ellington
Thomas Jarrell
Frank Moore
T. Meador Moore
Oscar Thomas
John Will (Jack) Walker
Early Williams

WORLD WAR II

Laurence Powell
Ralph Williams
James R. Meador
Thomas A. Moore, Jr.
Frederick Gammon
Jesse Burton
Amos Burton
John Richard Jarrell
J. T. Gillispie
Edward Burton
Jesse Williams
Edgar Jarrell
Haywood Robertson
Claude Robertson

KOREAN WAR

Fred Burton

BETHLEHEM CHURCH CEMETERY

As of December 31, 1988

Adams, Mary Matlock	1879		1944	wife of Oswell J. Adams
Amos, Mary P 31-Aug	1824	20-Jul	1911	
Anderson, Carolya L 27-Jul	1941	Living		
Anderson, Cora (Alice) Irving 06-Sep	1889	18-Jul	1962	
Anderson, Edward N(athem) 30-Sep	1850	22-Mar	1921	
Anderson, Edward R 29-Oct	1916	29-Jul	1976	
Anderson, Florence E 17-Dec	1902	04-Apr	1922	
Anderson, Frank L 02-Apr	1886	20-Dec	1955	
Anderson, Gordon 24-Nov	1919	04-Feb	1957	
Anderson, Irene G(unn) 20-Apr	1918	Living		
Anderson, John Inge 08-Sept	1880	28-Dec	1960	
Anderson, Margaret Moore 15-May	1882	16 June	1932	wife of John I. Anderson
Anderson, Mollie V 10-Sep	1875	15-Apr	1898	
Anderson, Sallie (Jane) Ratliffe 17-Jul	1849	25-Oct	1921	
Anderson, Sallie Belle 04-Sep	1887	17-Jun	1960	
Anderson, William Ratliffe 05-Apr	1884	20-May	1963	
Anderson (Infant Son)		20	27,00	son of Mary & Gordon Anderson
Barnes, Edgar Russel 02-Mar	1902	25-Jun	1905	son of M D & P P Barnes
Barnes Paulina Alcon	1883	27-Mar	1926	S S W & (wife of) M D Barnes
Barnes, William B 16-Aug	1885	19-May	1916	o o w to (wife or) in D Datites
Billings, Addie Moore 27-Sep	1870	12-Jul	1927	wife of Rev C M Billings
Burton, Allen C	1895	13-Jun	1979	Married 25 June 1924
Burton, Charles F 20-Jun	1899	04-Jan	1983	Walled 20 July 1224
Burton, Daisy M(oore) 05-Sep	1881	06-Apr	1960	(wife of W F Burton)
Burton, Edward 23-Feb	1903	03-May	1913	son of J M & Emma A Burton
Burton, Emma Amos 19-Jun	1861	03-May	1913	wife of John M Burton
Burton, Ivey Moore	1904	27-1 eb	1974	S S W Charles F Burton
Burton, J Luther 21-Sep	1884	14-Jan	1969	5 5 W Charks I Borton
Burton, James Lewis 05-Jul	1949	19-Jan	1986	
Burton, Jesse C 08-Mar	1886	19-Mar	1906	son of J M & Emma A Burton
Burton, John M 27-Sep	1854	15-Jan	1936	Son of g , if a claima is built
Burton, Lottie Belle 02-Feb	1890	16-May	1973	daughter of J M & Emma A
Burton	1070	10-,may	17/2	dadgiter of J in the Edina A
Burton, Minnie J(arrell) 15-Dec	1902			
Burton, Minnie M Meador 12-May	1886	10-Jun	1979	(wife of J Luther Burton)
Burton, Sidney 23-Feb	1903	07-Apr	1903	son of J M & Emma A Burton
Burton, W Frank	1881	09-Jul	1965	(husband of Daisy M Burton)
Burton, William Goodwin 24-Jul	1862	29-Nov	1899	(nasound of Duisy M Barton)
But Gar, Wilmouth Hancock	1863	27101	1918	wife of William Goodwin Burton
Butier, Laura M(eador) 04-Aug	1875	25-Apr	1963	(wife of William H Butler)
Bulter, William H 14-Jan	1870	03-Sep	1949	(of william ti bouci)
Carter, Ed Thomas 26-Mar	1939	26-Mar	1939	
Carter, Edith M(eador) 19-Apr	1891	05-Jan	1985	(wife of J Willie Carter)
Carter, Edward T	1918	oc-jail	1975	(mic of J wine Carter)
Carter, Fred W	1885		1950	
Carter, J Willie 21-May	1891	08-Oct	1978	
Carrery J Willie	1071	00-001	1710	

Bethlehem Church Cemetery

Carter, James David 15-Dec	1898	23-Jan	1982	
	1887	05-Sep	1932	
Carter, Mattie S Thomas 08-Apr	1864	оз-жр	1905	
Corum, Alice Haizlip				
Corum, Richard Payton	1857	20 4	1943	
Corum, William Pink 12-Feb	1866	28-Apr	1945	
Cox, Gracie	1908	24-Sep	1910	daughter of John & Lizzie Cox
Dallas, Frank Smith 10-Jan	1871	19-Mar	1944	
Dallas, John Fulton 19-May	1853	06-Mar	1922	/ 10
Dallas, Mary J 20-Aug	1872	10-Sep	1958	(wife of Frank Smith Dallas)
Dallas, Mary L 03-Oct	1897	22-Sep	1974	
Dallas, Nannie J Burton 13-Oct	1857	19-Jun	1935	wife of John F Dallas
Dallas, Russell W 26-Mar	1896	07-Nov	1944	
Dallas, Sallie D (Burton) 25-Feb	1860	12-Feb	1898	wife of J F Dallas
Duncan, Eliza (Rivers) W(illiams)	1893		1966	(wife of William M Duncan)
Duncan, Tyrone R 30-Aug	1939	27-Jan	1975	Pvt US Army
Duncan, William M	1883		1966	
Fulcher, Margaret Lee 30-Jun	1929	06-Jul	1929	
Gammon, J(ohn) Weldon 25-Nov	1896	15-Dec	1958	
Gammon, William D	1861		1956	
Gammon, Minnie D(uncan)	1894		1982	(wife of William D Gammon)
Gilbert, Mary Byrd Moore 02-Nov	1919	02-Jan	1945	wife of B B Gilbert
Gillispie, J.O	1891	01-Nov	1960	
Gillispie, Minnie O 12-Nov	1890	11-Aug	1979	(wife of J O Gillispie)
Hines, Jarvis Owens 24-Jun	1883	62-Jui	1954	•
Hines, Pearl Moore 09-Oct	1886	13-Aug	1975	(wife of Jarvis O Hines)
Howe, Nancy Burton 24-Jul	1891	22-Nov	1976	
Jarrell, Aylene D(allas) 06-Sep	1893	19-Sep	1982	(wife of Ernest G Jarrell)
Jarrell, Ernest G 06-Aug	1895	28-Aug	1979	,
Kernodle, Frances A	1845		1926	wife of William L Matlock
King, Sara Burton 21-Jun	1899	12-Dec	1978	(wife of William Seward King)
King, William Seward 12-Sep	1895	10-Dec	1969	Pvt Btry 317 Field Army WW1
Lillard, Dewey				,
Lillard, Mary				
Lillard, Moses				
Livengood, Florence Crews 13-May	1886	26-Mar	1930	wife of C H Livengood
Livengood, Hettie Jane 29-Jun	1884	26-Oct	1918	wife of C H Livengood
Livengood, Michael Scott 23-Dec	1953	16-Sep	1959	Wife of Call Livengood
Livengood, Richard Dennis	1,00	19-Apr	1955	
Martin, Cevera Hobson 21-Apr	1899	29-Aug	1928	
Martin, Gertude 03-Mar	1921	03-Mar	1921	daughter of C H & Lucy Martin
Matlock, Annie Miller Ware	1885	05-14141	1972	wife of John Burgess Matlock
Matlock, Ida Sue	1921		1927	wife of John Durgess Matiock
Matlock, John Burgess	1877		1951	
, -	1851	30-Mar	1901	
Matlock, William L 19-Jul	1875	20-Nov	1904	
Matlock, William Richard Gordon 22-Oct				CCW William Iro Mayno-1
Maynard, Maude M Moore 02-Jan	1879	05-Oct 27-Oct	1973 1962	SSW William Ira Maynard
Maynard, William Ira 01-Oct	1872			
Meador, Charlie A 05-Dec	1892	14-Dec	1955	
Meador, E(dward) P(eter) 21-Dec	1850	29-Jan	1923	
Meador, George R 05-May	1888	07-Oct	1888	
Meador, James Edward 15-Sep	1880	07-Jan	1939	mile of Imme Diameters
Meador, Lillie Martin 09-Aug	1890	07-Nov	1963	wife of James Edward Meador
Meador, Mary R(atliff) 26-Oct	1855	23-Jun	1943	(wife of E P Meador)
Meador, Mattie Land 23-Apr	1882	09-Apr	1971	

Bethlehem Church Cementary

Meador, W W 28-Sep	1839	09-Jan	1928	
Meador, William M	1884		1971	
Mitchell, Cora Dallas 23-Aug	1880	16-Jun	1955	(wife of James Wheeler Mitchell)
Mitchell, James Wheeler 23-Jul	1877	30-Nov	1961	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Mobley, Clyde Washington 06-Nov	1895	21-Nov	1.905	son of J A & M R Mobley
Mobley, James A 20-Oct	1866	22-Oct	1902	-
Mobley, Lena Moir Jul	1864	12-Dec	1916	wife of J W Mobley
Mobley, Minnie Ratliffe 24-Oct	1868	31-Jul	1902	(wife of J A Mobley)
Mobley, (Infant Son) 27-Oct	1953	27-Oct	1953	son of James R & Hilda Mobley
Moir, Elizabeth Hunter 04-May	1905	04-Aug		our or games it as timed mobiley
Moir, Emma P	1875	12-Feb	1936	
Moir, Robert A	1834	13-May	1909	
Moir, Sallie E 28-Nov	1840	24-Dec	1930	
Moir, Samuel W	1866	18-Aug	1929	
Moir, Thomas	1909	10-Jun	1929	
Moir, W N	2707	10 9011		
Moore, Annie Mobley 07-Apr	1852	06-Jan	1911	(2nd) wife of J(ohn) R Moore
Moore, Bessie D(owns) 16-Sep	1876	oo-jan	1975	SSW J Nathan Moore
Moore, Ed C 19-May	1896	15-Mar	1982	55W J Mathan Woole
Moore, Ellen E Mobley 07-Jun	1841	27-Mar	1894	(1st) wife of John R Moore
Moore, Eloise M(obley) 18-Sep	1897	13-Jul	1973	(1st) whe of John R Moore
Moore, Emma Dallas 24-Apr	1888	06-Feb	1971	
·	1861		1943	(wife of Coores H Moore)
Moore, Eugenia C (Moore) 19-Jun Moore, Frank 18-Jun	1867	22-Jan 10-Mar	1926	(wife of George H Moore)
Moore, Frank C	1892 1857	16-Dec	1973 1941	
Moore, George H(arritage) 20-Mar		01-Mar		demaktion of LE & C D Manne
Moore, Gracie Johns 21-Aug	1906	23-Aug	1906	daughter of J F & S B Moore
Moore, Ida (Foster) 01-Sep	1867	14-Nov	1960	SSW Frank Moore
Moore, J Nathan 17-May	1880	07-Sep	1961	
Moore, James Fulton	1924	29-Jan	1924	
Moore, James W 21-Dec	1859	06-Jan	1938	lought I D 9 EU - E M
Moore, Janie C	1876	20.4	1894	daughter J R & Ellen E Moore
Moore, John Fleming Jr 18-Nov	1913	28-Apr	1919	son of John F & Sallie V Moore
Moore, John F(leming) 15-May	1874	02-Sep	1952	
Moore, John Robert 07-Mar	1846	04-Nov	1922	
Moore, Lena K	1887	07-Sep	1955	
Moore, Lewis W	1907	23-May	1970	
Moore, Mary Womble 10-Jan	1883	23-Nov	1919	SSW Thomas Anderson Moore
Moore, Mary Jewell 05-Feb	1909	27-Aug	1914	daughter of T A & Mary Moore
Moore, Mollie Bell Smith 27-Nov	1859	11-Jan	1938	SSW & wife of James W Moore
Moore, Nannie J 13-Feb	1848	24-Dec	1932	
Moore, Ruth (Infant)		18-Oct	1923	
Moore, Sallie V(ictoria) Edwards 11-Sep	1877	11-Sep	1945	wife of John F Moore
Moore, Thomas Anderson 18-Aug	1876	05-Jun	1953	
Moore. Thomas Meador 01-Apr	1891	09-Jul	1973	
Moore, William Oscar 14-Mar	1894	10-Nov	1943	
Pugh, Ellis W 12-May	1861	29-Jul	1949	
Pugh, Florence M(oore) 31-May	1875	12-Mar	1950	SSW Ellis W Pugh
Ratliffe, James J(ackson) 30-Nov	1862	31-Dec	1937	husband of Nellie Womble Ratliffe
Ratliffe, Nannie B 16-Jun	1865	04-Apr	1935	
Ratliffe, Nellie Womble 26-Dec	1871	21-Sep	1943	wife of James J Ratliffe
Shelton, Larry Andrew 12-Sep	1937	03-Aug	1940	son of Mr & Mrs. C C Shelton
Shreve, Robert Benjamin 16-Feb	1904	30-Apr	1980	
Shropshire, Sarah Gibson 12-Oct	1858	13-Nov	1925	wife of William T Shropshire

Bethlehem Church Cementary

Shropshire, William T 07-Aug	1840	23-Apr	1926	husband of Sarah G Shropshire
Somers, Charles E 13-Feb	1913	06-Dec	1979	•
Somers, George Edward 06-Dec	1887	28-Sep	1939	
Stratton, Howard H Dec	1905	-Jan	1965	
Stratton, Maddie H 25-Oct	1903	25-Jan	1985	
Stratton, Vivian MJan	1932	-Nov	1959	
Talbott, Infant Son		24-Oct	1972	son of Roy & Shirley Talbott
Talley, James T(homas) 02-Jul	1906	02-Dec	1972	,,
Talley, Lillie May (Wilson) 24-Feb	1907	27-Jun	1987	(wife of James Thomas Talley)
Thomas, Edgar P 03-Mar	1901	07-Nov	1982	(, ,,
Thomas, Mildred S(tokes) 11-May	1905	25-Mar	1985	(wife of Edgar P Thomas)
Walker, Elizabeth M(oore) 18-Mar	1898	26-Nov	1974	,
Walker, James R	1918		1957	
Walker, Lavada Norman 23-Dec	1882	01-Jan	1933	(wife of) Tyre Watson Walker
Walker, Sallie 18-Nov	1910	24-Jun	1936	, , ,
Walker, Thomas J 13-Mar	1900	29-Dec	1973	
Walker, Tyre Watson 24-Aug	1877	07-Oct	1951	
Ware, Susan Anna Matlock 05-May	1884	22-Sep	1965	wife of Sterling Ansel Ware, MD
Weaver, Pauline Livengood 15-Mar	1914	06-Aug	1984	
Williams, Alex(ander) R(atliffe)	1888		1956	
Williams, Annie C 25-Jan	1901	Living		(wife of Lawerence Williams)
Williams, Bettie Dallas	1896		1963	(wife of Alex R Williams)
Williams, C(harles) T(homas) 01-Jan	1849	28-Jun	1924	,,
Williams, Elizabeth Ellington 27-Feb	1856	01-Oct	1924	SSW & Wife of J M Williams
Williams, Fannie F 28-Apr	1894	02-Mar	1982	•
Williams, Francis Edward "Buster" . 21-Oct	1916	10-May	1980	
Williams, J M	1852	31-Jan	1903	
Williams, James Keen 19-Nov	1889	25-Jan	1974	
Williams, J(esse) T(homas) 27-Jul	1879	29-Mar	1943	
Williams, Lawrence 19-May	1896	07-Nov	1981	
Williams, Lucy Duncan 13-Jul	1892	23-Jan	1946	Wife of J T Williams
Williams, Martha Virginia Ratliffe . 20-May	1851	27-Jan	1929	Wife of C T Williams
Williams, Mary Doyle	1903	0	1950	(wife of Willie M Williams)
Williams, Troy McDonald	1884		1929	(wife of Willie M Williams)
Williams, William Early 08-Mar	1887	10-Mar	1947	(Mile of Millions Millions)
Williams, William M	1885		1966	
Wilsom, Clay M	1874		1928	
Wilson, Emma Maude Anderson 23-Nov	1893	17-Jan	1937	wife of M G Wilson
Wilson, Jesse Newton 23-Nov	1893	17-Jan	1897	son of Samuel & Lizzie Wilson
Wilson, Lizzie (Edna) W(illiams) 30-Mar	1873	04-Jan	1957	(wife of Samuel S Wilson)
Wilson, Maude Williams	1877	. 021	1960	(
Wilson, Meade Guerrant	1867		1940	
Wilson, Meade May 30-May	1906	15-Jun	1906	son of M G & E M Wilson
Wilson, Samuel S 29-Dec	1867	03-Dec	1945	
	1007	JJ-Dec	1740	

Adams, Charles L
Albea, William W
Allred, James G 61
Anderson, E. N
Anderson, Edward R., Jr 65
Anderson, John H
Aycock, Alexander L
Barrett, Robert G
Baskerville, W. S
Bethlehem choir
Bethlehem United Methodist Youth
Bethlehem Young People
Bethlehem's Women's Society
Board of Stewards 1935
Bruton, David R
Bumpas, Robah
Burrus, A. J
Burton, A. C
Burton, Allen
Burton, Amos
Burton, Charles F
Burton, Charles F., Jr
Burton, Charles F., Sr 65
Burton, Fred
Burton, George A
Burton, J. L
Burton, Jesse
Burton, John M
Burton, Mrs. C. F., Jr 66
Burton, Mrs. C. F., Sr 66
Burton, Mrs. Charles F
Burton, Mrs. Frances S
Burton, Mrs. J. Luther Burton
Carroll, W. A

	5
CHRISTMAS CONFERENCE 7	73
	76
Circuit Stewards 1894	27
	8.
Circuit Stewards 1901	0
Coltrane, N. E	7
	1
Corum, William H	23
	4
Ellington, James H	23
Epworth League	7
Field, Benton	9
Field, D. E	_
	8
Gammon, Mrs. Frederick 69, 7	
Gammon, Nell	
Godfrey, Guy H	9
Goode, Charles P	0
Goode, Charles P	9
Goode, Charles P	0 9 8
Goode, Charles P	9 8 9
Goode, Charles P	8 9 8 9
Goode, Charles P. 4 Guerrant, Daniel E. 8, Guerrant, Peter D. 7, Guerrant, Thomas P. 8, Guilford Circuit 1830 1 Hager, Parker H. 7	0 9 8 9 0
Goode, Charles P. 4 Guerrant, Daniel E. 8, Guerrant, Peter D. 7, Guerrant, Thomas P. 8, Guilford Circuit 1830 1 Hager, Parker H. 7 Harris, W. Reid 4	80 8 9 0 11 2
Goode, Charles P. 4 Guerrant, Daniel E. 8, Guerrant, Peter D. 7, Guerrant, Thomas P. 8, Guilford Circuit 1830 1 Hager, Parker H. 7 Harris, W. Reid 4 Harris, William E. 6	0 9 8 9 0 1 2 8
Goode, Charles P. 4 Guerrant, Daniel E. 8, Guerrant, Peter D. 7, Guerrant, Thomas P. 8, Guilford Circuit 1830 1 Hager, Parker H. 7 Harris, W. Reid 4 Harris, William E. 6 Harrison, R. J. 2	0 9 8 9 0 1 2 8
Goode, Charles P. 4 Guerrant, Daniel E. 8, Guerrant, Peter D. 7, Guerrant, Thomas P. 8, Guilford Circuit 1830 1 Hager, Parker H. 7 Harris, W. Reid 4 Harris, William E. 6 Harrison, R. J. 2 Haynes, Herman 6	0 9 8 9 0 1 2 8 1 5
Goode, Charles P. 4 Guerrant, Daniel E. 8, Guerrant, Peter D. 7, Guerrant, Thomas P. 8, Guilford Circuit 1830 1 Hager, Parker H. 7 Harris, W. Reid 4 Harris, William E. 6 Harrison, R. J. 2 Haynes, Herman 6 Henley, Mrs. Anna 5	0 9 8 9 0 1 2 8 1 5 8
Goode, Charles P. 4 Guerrant, Daniel E. 8, Guerrant, Peter D. 7, Guerrant, Thomas P. 8, Guilford Circuit 1830 1 Hager, Parker H. 7 Harris, W. Reid 4 Harris, William E. 6 Harrison, R. J. 2 Haynes, Herman 6 Henley, Mrs. Anna 5 Hudson, William 5	0 9 8 9 0 1 2 8 1 5 8 9
Goode, Charles P. 4 Guerrant, Daniel E. 8, Guerrant, Peter D. 7, Guerrant, Thomas P. 8, Guilford Circuit 1830 1 Hager, Parker H. 7 Harris, W. Reid 4 Harris, William E. 6 Harrison, R. J. 2 Haynes, Herman 6 Henley, Mrs. Anna 5 Hudson, William 5 Hundley, Ronald 65, 6	0 9 8 9 0 1 2 8 1 5 8 9
Goode, Charles P. 4 Guerrant, Daniel E. 8, Guerrant, Peter D. 7, Guerrant, Thomas P. 8, Guilford Circuit 1830 1 Hager, Parker H. 7 Harris, W. Reid 4 Harris, William E. 6 Harrison, R. J. 2 Haynes, Herman 6 Henley, Mrs. Anna 5 Hudson, William 5 Hundley, Ronald 65, 6 Isley, Claris G. 5	0 9 8 9 0 1 2 8 1 5 8 9 9 9
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